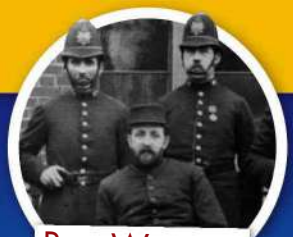
EXPERT GUIDE TO **NORTHAMPTONSHIRE** RESOURCES

BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING FAMILY HISTORY MAGAZINE

ISSUE 224 DECEMBER 2024 £5.75

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?®



BEST WEBSITES
POLICE ANCESTORS

HOW TO FIND
FIRST WORLD WAR MEDICAL RECORDS

From field ambulances to casualty clearing stations we reveal essential online resources and how to use them

DNA SUCCESS

• Connect to more matches • Get more from geographic data • Utilise the latest tools

A DNA test helped me uncover who my great grandfather was

COURT RECORDS

Investigate criminal ancestors before 1875 with our guide

RECORDING REVOLUTION

The inventions that transformed music

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- Clues from an Essex estate map
- Researching children sent to Canada
- Cataloguing WW1 tribunal records

DISCOVER THE WHOLE PICTURE

When you explore your family tree, you find names, dates and places. But it's the extra details that truly reveal your family story.

Ancestry has a huge range of historical records, and with an average of two million added every day, there's always more to discover. So even when you think you know your family, they can keep surprising you.

ancestry®
Bring your backstory to life™

Do you have a fascinating family story to share?

We'd love to hear about your discoveries, email us at *yourstory@ancestry.co.uk*

Welcome

Sarah's Top Tip

You should handle all record sets that have limited information with caution

I loved Phil Tomaselli's guide to First World War medical records (**page 38**). The indexing project at The National Archives got me particularly excited. However, these records often provide scant detail, so it's vital not to assume that someone who shares the same name as your ancestor *is* your ancestor – you don't want to accidentally give your grandfather syphillis! The records are included in Findmypast's free weekend (see **page 10**), giving you the perfect opportunity to explore them – and if you use discount code **NOVEMBER2024** you can save 30% on an Everything subscription afterwards.

When I talk to people who have taken a DNA test, I often find that after the initial excitement ("I'm 5 per cent Swedish, is that my Viking roots?") the results can linger, neglected, on a website. But, whether you took a test years ago, or are thinking of asking for one as a Christmas gift, the tools for getting more from your results have come on leaps and bounds. On **page 14** Debbie Kennett shares her 10 best tips for squeezing every bit of genealogical goodness out of your test results. And please follow her first tip and attach a tree to your results (just asking for a friend...!).

This issue goes on sale on 5 November, which coincides with our annual Transcription Tuesday event. We wrote about how to take part last issue, but we've also got plenty of information about the event online: **whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com/feature/transcription-tuesday-2024**. One of the projects is a Welsh peace petition, signed by almost 400,000 women in 1923. Our aim is to finish transcribing the whole petition over the course of a day. Unusual records like these can give us fresh insight into our forebears, and by taking part you will be helping other family historians for generations to come. We're also indexing some tricky Irish parish registers for FamilySearch, if you want a challenge! Enjoy the issue.

Sarah

Sarah Williams Editor
sarah.williams@ourmedia.co.uk

Get In Touch

Advertising
t 0117 300 8803
e *andy.williams@ourmedia.co.uk*

Editorial & Website Queries
t 0117 300 8621
e *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

Magazine App Support
w *ourmediaapps.co.uk/digital-contact-form*

Q&A Queries
e *wdytyaquestions@ourmedia.co.uk*

Subscriptions Help & FAQs
t 03330 162120*
t +44 1604 973728 (overseas)
w *ourmediashop.com/contactus*
w *ourmediashop.com/faqs*

*UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed-line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of free call packages call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Monday to Friday 9am–5pm.

Contributors

Debbie Kennett
Debbie is a genetic genealogist, lecturer and writer who also has an interest in surnames. On **page 14** she looks at some of the latest tools to help you get more from DNA.

Lauren Potts
A family historian and journalist, Lauren loves a good story, so when she uncovered the heartbreaking reason why a boy in her tree went missing, she had to share it (**page 18**).

Paul Blake
Author of *Tracing Your Insolvent Ancestors*, Paul has been writing and lecturing on family history for over 30 years. On **page 28** he explains the pre-1875 criminal-justice system.

COVER IMAGE: GETTY IMAGES/NURSES LIFT A FORMER PATIENT DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

CONTENTS
DECEMBER 2024

FEATURES

14 DNA Success ON THE COVER
Genetic genealogist Debbie Kennett shares 10 tips for making the most of your test results, including how to connect to more matches, get more from geographic data and utilise the latest tools

18 Sent To Canada ON THE COVER
Lauren Potts explains how she discovered that her great grand uncle was one of the British Home Children – and what happened to him during his new life in Canada

52 Recording Revolution ON THE COVER
Jonathan Scott reveals how the arrival of recorded sound changed the music industry and made many of our ancestors avid listeners

RESEARCH ADVICE

28 Focus On ON THE COVER
Paul Blake discusses the wealth of records available to research your forebears' encounters with the criminal-justice system in England and Wales before 1875

35 Best Websites ON THE COVER
Jonathan Scott recommends the essential online resources if your ancestor served in the police

38 Record Masterclass ON THE COVER
Phil Tomaselli explains how to search medical records from the First World War if your relation was in the Army

50 Tech Tips
Discover how you can make the most of Legacy Family Tree's free Charting tool with Nick Peers' expert advice

YOUR RESEARCH

24 Reader Story
Rachel Chávez's family history includes poverty, tragedy and an epidemic, not to mention a hellraiser, a hero, royal connections and servants who fell in love

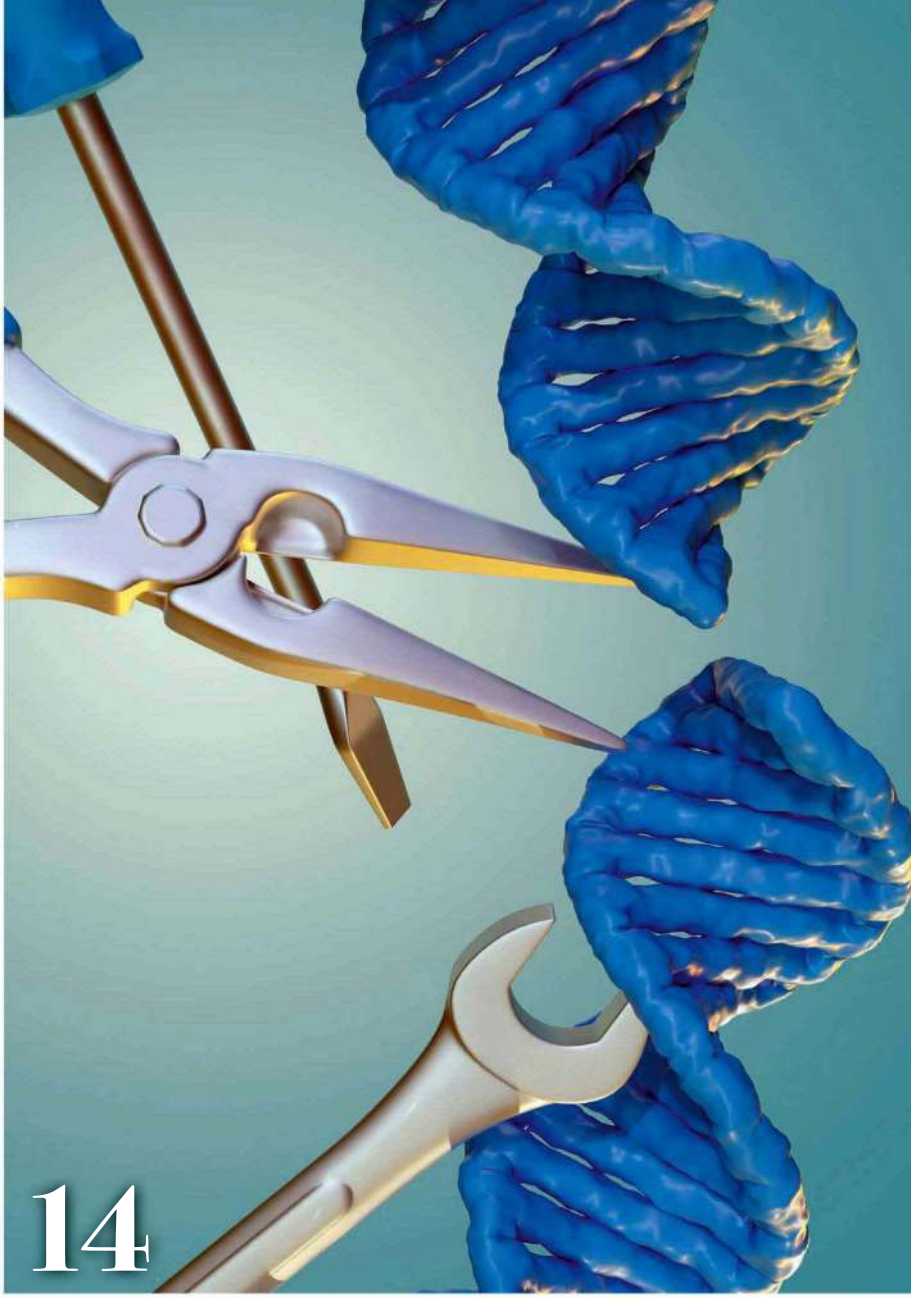
58 Eureka Moment ON THE COVER
"A DNA test helped me uncover who my great grandfather was," says author Sarah Ward

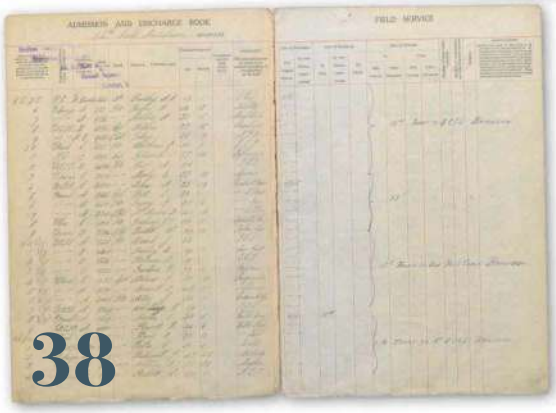
74 Family Hero
Karen Meager has found a child hero in her tree

REGULARS

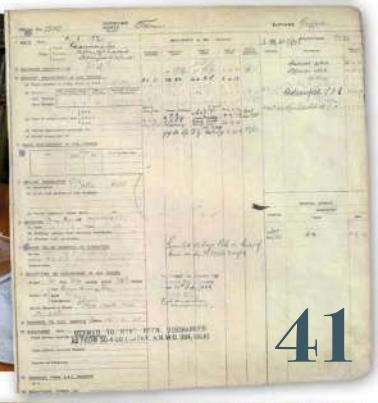
6 Letters
Your ideas, comments and advice

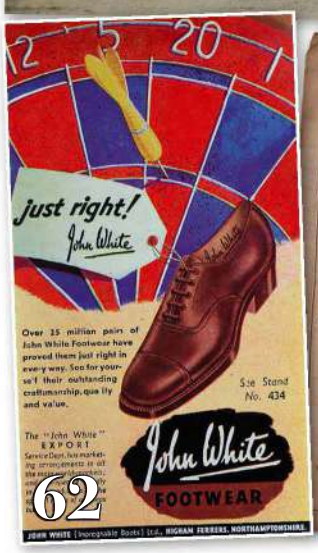
10 News
All of the latest developments, including Findmypast going free for the Remembrance weekend

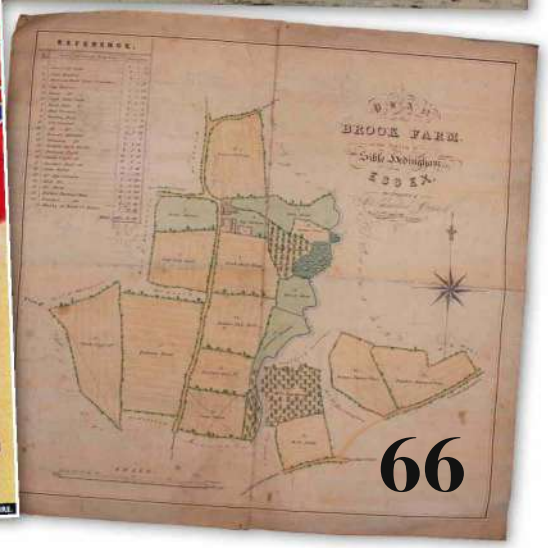




GETTY IMAGES







GETTY IMAGES / UNP/TONY BUCKINGHAM / GRACES GUIDE / ESSEX RECORD OFFICE

SUBSCRIPTION OFFER 22

SUBSCRIBE TODAY AND GET A MONTH'S FREE TRIAL

13 Off The Record
Alan Crosby celebrates the joys of bath night

41 Q&A
From a surprising Scottish link in DNA test results to sourcing bankruptcy records and dating a school photograph, our brilliant experts solve your mysteries

47 Your Projects ON THE COVER
Rosemary Collins finds out about a team cataloguing First World War military tribunal records from Suffolk

48 The Big Picture
Soldiers lay a light railway line near Boesinghe in Ypres ahead of the Battle of Passchendaele in 1917

57 *Wdytya? Magazine* Shop
Back issues, magazine storage and certificate binders

61 What's On
Online and in-person talks, shows and exhibitions

62 Around Britain ON THE COVER
Jonathan Scott rounds up Northamptonshire resources

66 Gem From The Archive ON THE COVER
An estate map from Essex, 1833

GUIDE

68 Books & Digital Picks
This month's family history inspiration

70 TV & Radio
How *Blitz* sheds new light on Second World War London

Letters

Email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

Write to *WDYTYA? Magazine*, Eagle House, Bristol BS1 4ST

WIN an AncestryDNA test kit from **ancestry.co.uk**
WORTH £79

The writer of our star letter wins an AncestryDNA test **worth £79** – so drop us a line and share your thoughts with us.

A Black And White Wedding

STAR LETTER

After reading Chloe O'Shea's article about using online newspapers in the November issue, I had to write in to share this gem of a find about my great grandad's sister Isabella Dagnall. She married Arthur Symonds on 1 August 1916 at the Warrington registry office. I decided to check the newspaper archives on Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**) to see if I could learn more about them. To my surprise, I uncovered an article in the *Runcorn Examiner* about their wedding day, and was utterly astonished.

They were the first interracial couple to be married in the whole borough. I was overwhelmed with pride and respect for this brave couple, who declared their love to the whole town, despite there being so many people against their marriage taking place. They stood up for their rights to be married, and I am so proud of them both!

I can't believe the negative attitudes as large crowds gathered outside the registry office. Police had to cut a path for the happy couple to get through. I love Arthur's message to the people of the town, standing up for his right to marry Isabella. He sounds like a very articulate and intelligent man.

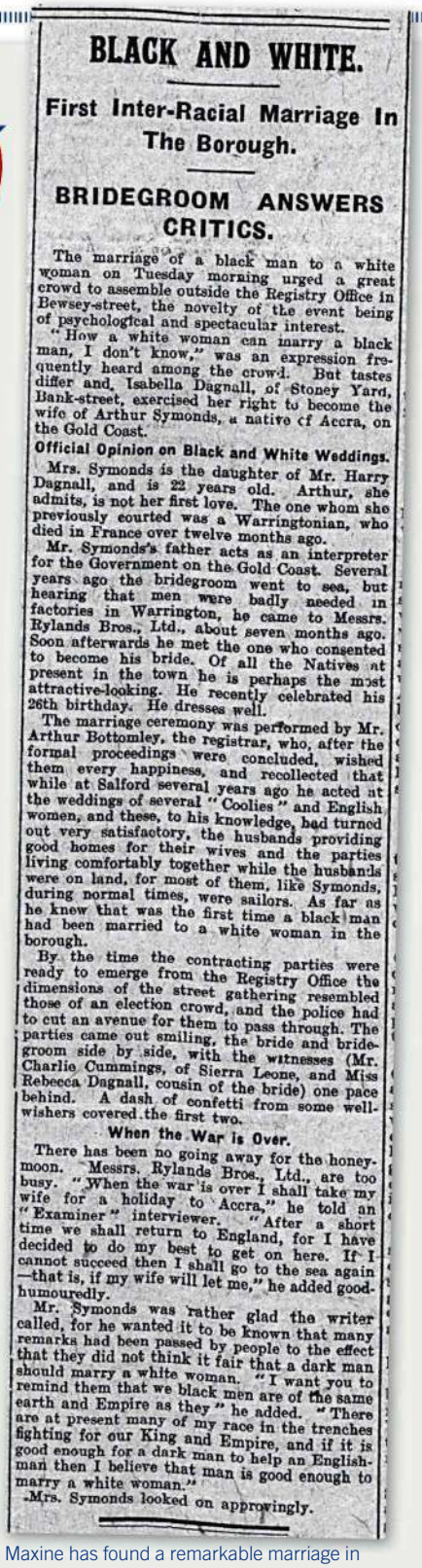
I got married a few years ago, and had such an amazing day full of happy guests and well-wishers. I can't imagine what it was like for them to have people in the crowds with such negative thoughts about them. What's lovely is that it looks like they didn't let that spoil their special day. They went on to have four children – Rosina, Catherine, Arthur and Isabella.

They spent 10 happy years together. Sadly Arthur Symonds died in 1926 at 36 years old, but his wife Isabella lived until she was 93! I found the family grave in a cemetery in Warrington using Find a Grave (**findagrave.com**). They are buried together, with Rosina.

I did some further research and found a photograph of Isabella in the obituaries section of the *Warrington Guardian*. It was lovely to put a face to the name, and see this amazing lady who did not let anything stand in her path to true love. She is my hero, and I wanted to share this amazing story with your readers.

Maxine Baines, by email

Editor Replies **Thank you for getting in touch Maxine. You are quite right to be proud to have Isabella in your family tree. With four children, I hope she has many descendants who are also proud of her.**



BLACK AND WHITE.

First Inter-Racial Marriage In The Borough.

BRIDEGROOM ANSWERS CRITICS.

The marriage of a black man to a white woman on Tuesday morning urged a great crowd to assemble outside the Registry Office in Bewsey-street, the novelty of the event being of psychological and spectacular interest.

"How a white woman can marry a black man, I don't know," was an expression frequently heard among the crowd. But tastes differ and, Isabella Dagnall, of Stoney Yard, Bank-street, exercised her right to become the wife of Arthur Symonds, a native of Accra, on the Gold Coast.

Official Opinion on Black and White Weddings.

Mrs. Symonds is the daughter of Mr. Harry Dagnall, and is 22 years old. Arthur, she admits, is not her first love. The one whom she previously courted was a Warringtonian, who died in France over twelve months ago.

Mr. Symonds's father acts as an interpreter for the Government on the Gold Coast. Several years ago the bridegroom went to sea, but hearing that men were badly needed in factories in Warrington, he came to Messrs. Rylands Bros., Ltd., about seven months ago. Soon afterwards he met the one who consented to become his bride. Of all the Natives at present in the town he is perhaps the most attractive-looking. He recently celebrated his 26th birthday. He dresses well.

The marriage ceremony was performed by Mr. Arthur Bottomley, the registrar, who, after the formal proceedings were concluded, wished them every happiness, and recollected that while at Salford several years ago he acted at the weddings of several "Coolies" and English women, and these, to his knowledge, had turned out very satisfactory, the husbands providing good homes for their wives and the parties living comfortably together while the husbands were on land, for most of them, like Symonds, during normal times, were sailors. As far as he knew that was the first time a black man had been married to a white woman in the borough.

By the time the contracting parties were ready to emerge from the Registry Office the dimensions of the street gathering resembled those of an election crowd, and the police had to cut an avenue for them to pass through. The parties came out smiling, the bride and bridegroom side by side, with the witnesses (Mr. Charlie Cummings, of Sierra Leone, and Miss Rebecca Dagnall, cousin of the bride) one pace behind. A dash of confetti from some well-wishers covered the first two.

When the War is Over.

There has been no going away for the honeymoon. Messrs. Rylands Bros., Ltd., are too busy. "When the war is over I shall take my wife for a holiday to Accra," he told an "Examiner" interviewer. "After a short time we shall return to England, for I have decided to do my best to get on here. If I cannot succeed then I shall go to the sea again—that is, if my wife will let me," he added good-humouredly.

Mr. Symonds was rather glad the writer called, for he wanted it to be known that many remarks had been passed by people to the effect that they did not think it fair that a dark man should marry a white woman. "I want you to remind them that we black men are of the same earth and Empire as they" he added. "There are at present many of my race in the trenches fighting for our King and Empire, and if it is good enough for a dark man to help an Englishman then I believe that man is good enough to marry a white woman."

Mrs. Symonds looked on approvingly.

Maxine has found a remarkable marriage in her family tree, thanks to online newspapers

Leave *Who Do You Think You Are?* Alone

It is surely with irony that Jeremy Baker says he is "pleased to see that there is to be a new series of *Who Do You Think You Are?*" in October's 'Letters' section, because there appears to be nothing about the show that he likes! He absolutely does not speak for me in his opinions!

While some celebrities are more well known than others, the latest series has given us an Olympian who was part of one of the greatest sporting days in living memory and who made us proud to be British; an actor who had me on the edge of my seat through several series of a police drama, and who has raised awareness of an awful disease through her work with the dementia choir; a comic actor who made me laugh till I cried through a sitcom set in the Phoenix Club; and an actor who has overcome adversity throughout her life to become a fantastic role model for others, as well as campaigning for British Sign Language to become more widespread in schools. All had interesting stories that help explain how they have become who they are today.

As for having roots abroad, is Mr Baker suggesting that he would only consider subjects for the programme who can trace their family lines solely in Britain? If so then that would even exclude the Royal Family!

Although no celebrity, my own husband would also be excluded despite many of his family lines being of English stock, because his biological grandfather's family came to London as Russian Jews escaping the pogroms in the late 19th century, while an Irish great grandfather on another line served in the British forces.

Surely Mr Baker should be proud that Britain is such an

inclusive and welcoming country! I suggest he turns the TV over.
Helen Wallace, Tilehurst, Reading

Editor Replies **Thank you for writing in Helen. We've had quite a few readers echoing your views and saying that they have enjoyed the current series, and appreciated having stories that covered overseas ancestry.**

WDYTYA? Suggestion

Regarding the letter from Jeremy Baker in the October issue in which he wondered why the series focuses on celebrities rather than "people with the most interesting histories", I asked the original consultant on the first four series, Nick Barratt, this very question at a local family history event some years ago.

His reply was that the BBC thought that viewers would not watch 'ordinary' people, and also that the celebrities were more versed in camera work.

However, I do not agree with either. For those of a certain age, the episodes of Eamonn Andrews' *This Is Your Life* that featured unsung heroes were always better than film stars in my opinion.
Lynn Wright, by email

Editor Replies **You weren't the only reader who wrote in asking for a series of *WDYTYA?* featuring ordinary people Lynn. One even suggested that the candidates should all be *WDYTYA? Magazine* subscribers. Now that's an idea I can get behind!**

Sarah reminds us of the role of nurses in the Second Boer War, such as this one in a field hospital on the Tugela River

Iveta Freiberga enjoyed singer Olly Murs' episode
Amazing and emotional story. I'm Latvian and seeing real facts and the story of what people went through in the Second World War is crazy and unbelievable.

Nurses And The Second Boer War

I was disappointed that the 'Best Websites' article about the Second Boer War in the October issue did not mention the nurses who served during the conflict. As a nurse historian I often find that women are overlooked in history and are under-represented – as they are on Wikipedia, where according to a study only 19 per cent of the biographical articles are about women, and in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, where only 13 per cent of the entries are women.

While the 2,000-plus nurses who served in this conflict are a small proportion of those caught up in the war, they played a significant role in caring for the sick and wounded.

There is an excellent page on the British Army Nurses website at **britisharmynurses.com/wiki/index.php?title=The_Boer_War**, and Dr Keiron Spires' invaluable database is located at **baseportal.com/cgi-bin/baseportal.pl?htx=/pcansr/Research/research**.

Please can you share these links with your readers?
Dr Sarah Rogers, by email

Editor Replies **I'm very happy to share these links and I'm sorry they weren't in our round-up.**

New Zealand Passenger Lists

I have recently started the long process of adding more passenger lists to my website, New Zealand Shipping Company Records for Genealogy (**nzsc.wordpress.com/**). I set it up to raise money for Cancer Research UK, and to provide an easy-to-search site for researchers.

The website was featured in the 'Your Projects' section of your magazine in July 2020, and I have just published a new blog post that tells the experiences of a Baker's Boy on the *Ruahine* in 1960. Bill Watson kindly sent me his memories, both fond and frightening, of his time on the ship. The passenger list for this voyage is also on the site.

There are now 77 complete passenger lists and 18 partial listings, and I have more to add.

To date £743 has been raised for Cancer Research UK.
David Ransom, West Sussex

Editor Replies **That's a great achievement David. I hope the additional material helps other readers with their research.**

Correcting Trees

I have been reading with interest the recent correspondence about wrong information on family trees that are shared online.

I recently came into contact with a distant relative, discovered through AncestryDNA (**ancestry.co.uk/dna**), and was able to view his tree. He had the same information as me until about the turn of the 19th/20th century and early 20th century, where his goes off at a tangent to mine, with totally different information.

Many years ago my uncle in Canada compiled our family tree, and when he died I was lucky enough to be sent all of his research, and that part of it mentioned was definitely different to the shared information on my distant relative's tree.

I did try, tactfully, to tell him that his information was more than likely wrong, but he was having none of it!

GETTY IMAGES

EUREKA MOMENT

How a reader broke down a research brick wall

'Researching This Mystery Photo Led To A Big Surprise'

Forty years ago, Jenny Wears was given a picture of an angelic infant. Establishing the young girl's identity and researching her life involved ingenious detective work and an amazing revelation, says Gail Dixon

Celebrating Your Discoveries

Many of us have an 'Eleanor Rigby' on our family tree – a woman who seemed to lead an isolated life like the eponymous character of the song by The Beatles. Perhaps they preferred a quiet life, or weren't as lonely as Paul McCartney envisaged when he wrote the lyrics.

Jenny Wears discovered a 'lost cousin' who appeared to have little to do with family, but two records have challenged that. Jenny tells her story.

JENNY WEARS

My Brick Wall

In the early 1980s, my husband Denis' elderly aunt Marjorie gave me a photograph of a toddler sitting on the lap of an older woman. Marjorie told us that the girl's name was Haidee, which seemed unusual. The photograph was put away for years, and the young girl never cropped up in conversation again.

I began researching Haidee in 2022 and discovered from her birth certificate that her real name was Haidee Marian Wood, and that she was born in 1895 at Maldon, Essex. Her father was William Wood, a railway engine driver, and her mother was Marion (née Pearson).

Tragically, Marion died in December of that year as a result of heart failure.

At some point between this and the 1901 census, Haidee was taken to live with her paternal grandmother Elizabeth Wood at Stanford Rivers in Essex, while William worked as an engine driver in London.

In 1897, William signed a contract to work for the East Indian Railway Company in Calcutta (now Kolkata), India. Haidee was eight years old in 1903 when Elizabeth died. What happened to her?

My Detective Work

Haidee had an unusual name, which made the search a little easier. In the 1911 census, she was aged 13 and working as a servant for William and Emilee Carter, in Walthamstow, East London.

I searched for a possible marriage or death, and even looked to see if she'd been a volunteer nurse during the First World War. However, there were no records of Haidee until the 1921 census, when she was working as a shorthand typist and living in Black Boy Lane, Tottenham, North London. To my surprise and excitement, she was listed as a niece. Who were the aunt and uncle?

The head of the household was John G Reeves, a fine-art restorer who lived with his wife Ellen and two sons. I knew that William Wood had three sisters: my husband's maternal grandmother Caroline; Ellen; and Alice, who died as a child.

So, it was Aunt Ellen who was the Emily connection.

The 1939 Register showed that Haidee was still working as a shorthand typist and living in Hornchurch, Essex. She gave her age as 29, but was actually 44. Haidee was living with a married couple by the name of Smith, and there was no family link.

I searched electoral rolls and rate books to try to locate her over the next few decades, all to no avail. I wondered if she travelled to India to see her father, but nothing came up.

I know that Haidee didn't marry, because she still had her birth name on her death certificate in 1975. This gave me an address in Islington, North London. I contacted clubs and church groups in the area, but they couldn't find any connection to her. She seemed to disappear until her death at Whittington Hospital, Islington.

The death certificate reinforced the 'lonely old lady' picture I'd created. The informant was a Margaret Ellen Sparks, who gave no relationship to Haidee and was tasked with "causing the disposal of the body" – an awful phrase.

I contacted the registrar whom I'd requested the death certificate from, and he told me that someone from the council acts as a death informant when there's nobody else to do so.

The record revealed that he left his estate of £2,940 to Haidee Marian Wood, spinster. So, it's possible that father and daughter had managed to keep in touch after all, Islington being just a few miles away.

I believe that the mysterious photograph shows Haidee with her grandmother Elizabeth Wood. Perhaps William wanted to have a picture of his mother and daughter that he could take with him to India. I'm very pleased to have 'found' Haidee and discovered so much information about her life.

Death Certificate, 1975

This record gave Jenny key information about her husband's cousin Haidee

1 Surname

2 Usual Address

3 Informant

My Eureka Moment

Have you broken through a brick wall?

Reader Tips

Former deputy registrar Antony has responded to November's 'Eureka Moment' article

I would be interested to know if anyone else has had the same experience, and if so how they got around it.

David Hammond, Hull, East Yorkshire

Editor Replies If you are absolutely certain that your information is correct, then I suspect that all you can do is attach your evidence and documents to your tree and make it public. That way, at least the truth is out there (somewhere).

@ElizbethjmSmith liked Gemma Collins' episode
I'd not heard of Gemma before this. I thought she was fab – loved how interested and enthusiastic she was. Fascinating back story too.

Qualifications To Inform On A Death

I was just reading your latest issue (November), and I noticed Gail Dixon's 'Eureka Moment' article in which Jenny Wears discussed the life of Haidee Marian Wood. The article mentioned that the informant on the death qualified by "causing the disposal of the body", and Jenny had been told that they could have been a member of council staff.

Although that is certainly possible, I think it is unlikely in this case. As a deputy registrar I dealt with deaths that had been registered by hospital staff, council officers and family solicitors, but in all those cases the address recorded on the register should be their official work address, not a home address which the example in the article seems to be.

The informant could have been a friend or acquaintance, or perhaps a former work colleague, but was certainly someone who was taking responsibility for arranging the funeral.

This particular qualification, which is usually worded as "causing the body to be buried (or cremated)", is only used when the person who is acting as the informant doesn't qualify by any other reason – such as by being related to the deceased, or present at the death. It shouldn't (other than for a brief period under the Covid-19 legislation) be the funeral director.

Sadly, a very common use of the qualification today is to cover a cohabiting partner (ie someone living with, but not married to or in a civil partnership with, the deceased), who if not present at the death may not qualify to be an informant under any other category. This can be very upsetting for them if they have lived together for many years.

Antony Marr, by email

Editor Replies Thank you for the extra insight, Antony. We have passed it on to Jenny.

YOUR LETTER IN PRINT We reserve the right to edit any letters sent to the magazine. Messages posted to our Facebook wall and tweets sent to us may also appear in print. The choice of Star Letter is the editor's and the prize is subject to change.

ourmedia

Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine is published by Our Media Limited

Issue 224 – December 2024

Editorial
Editor Sarah Williams
Production editor Seth Burgess
Features editor Rosemary Collins
Art editor Robbie Bennie

Advertising Sales
Advertising manager Andy Williams
0117 300 8803
Inserts Laurence Robertson
00 353 876 902208

Marketing
Head of loyalty, CRM and retention Rosa Sherwood
Subscriptions marketing coordinator Dennis Awdziejczyk

Press And PR
Head of PR Dominic Lobley

Content Operations
Director Sarah Powell
Senior content operations coordinator Holly Donmall
Ad design Camilla Owen
Senior ad coordinator Charles Thurlow

Subscriptions And Back Issues
t 03330 162120*
w **ourmediashop.com/contactus**
or write to *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine*, PO Box 3320, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton, UK
Basic annual subscription rates:
UK £74.75, Eire & Europe €70, ROW $75

Syndication & Licensing
Director of licensing & syndication Tim Hudson
Magazine syndication executive Emma Brunt

Our Media Ltd
Brand lead Rob Brock
Chief executive officer Andy Marshall

Wall To Wall Media Ltd
Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine is produced under licence from Wall to Wall Media Ltd. Wall to Wall Media Ltd is part of Shed Media, PLC and is one of the world's leading producers of factual and drama programming. Wall to Wall is the producer of the multi-award winning television series *Who Do You Think You Are?* The series is committed to reducing its carbon emissions and has signed up to 10:10 (**www.1010global.org**). This has involved hiring more local crews and taking fewer flights while continuing to make a series that goes to wherever the story leads. Visit **www.walltowall.co.uk** for more information.

© Our Media Ltd 2024

ISSN: 1755-7690
Printed by William Gibbons Ltd.

ipso Regulated We abide by IPSO's rules and regulations. To give feedback about our magazines, please visit **ourmedia.co.uk**, email *editorialcomplaints@ourmedia.co.uk*, or write to Legal, Our Media Ltd, Eagle House, Bristol, BS1 4ST.

Our Media Company is working to ensure that all of its paper comes from well-managed, Forest Stewardship Council-certified forests and other controlled sources. This magazine is printed on FSC-certified paper. It can be recycled for use in newspapers and packaging. Please remove any gifts, samples or wrapping and dispose of them at your local collection point.

*UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed-line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of free call packages call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Monday to Friday 9am–5pm. Overseas subscribers call +44 1604 973728.

THE GAZETTE
OFFICIAL PUBLIC RECORD

FIND YOUR ANCESTORS IN THE GAZETTE

- ✓ **Free to search** and create an account
- ✓ Trusted official public record, dating back to 1665
- ✓ Thousands of **military awards and promotions**, including WW1 zone
- ✓ Deceased estates notices
- ✓ Company and personal insolvency notices

OPEN A **FREE** ACCOUNT AND GET STARTED

The Gazette is on

Start your **free** search at
www.**thegazette**.co.uk

News

Rosemary Collins reports on data releases and genealogy news

Findmypast goes free for Remembrance weekend

Family history website Findmypast (findmypast.co.uk) is offering free access to every single one of its records on 8–11 November to mark the Remembrance Day weekend.

This includes its historic newspapers and the 1921 census of England and Wales, which is exclusive to the site.

On 18 October, Findmypast announced the start of a new family history challenge in the run-up to Remembrance Day (11 November).

The site is asking family historians to use its records to uncover the story of the Griffiths family, whose five sons fought in the First World War.

A different set of records will be free to access each weekend for four weeks, ending with free access to every record on Remembrance Day weekend.

Sarah Bush, managing director of Findmypast, said, "We're encouraging everyone to get researching and help us ensure every story is remembered."

The 1921 census is usually only available in Findmypast's 'Everything' subscription package (get 30% off this November with **NOVEMBER2025**).

Dr Matthews wearing a Serbian Red Cross uniform

A photo of Red Cross workers and patients outside a Serbian hospital, from one of Dr Matthews' articles

Other highlights of the website's collections include military service records; the British census (1841–1921); parish registers; birth, marriage and death records; and more than 84 million historic newspaper pages.

To demonstrate the kinds of stories that family historians might uncover during the weekend, the company's researchers have highlighted women's contributions to the First World War as revealed in historic newspapers.

In *The Sphere*, for example, they found eyewitness bulletins by Dr Caroline Matthews. She was born Caroline Twigge in 1877 in Liverpool. She became one of the earliest women to study medicine at Edinburgh University, and in 1907 married another doctor named Joseph Matthews.

Between 1912 and 1913, Dr Caroline Matthews worked as a surgeon in the Montenegrin Army and became a war correspondent for *The Sphere* during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913). During the First World War, she served as a medical officer in the Serbian Army.

On 13 October 1914, after the army had retreated, she stayed with the wounded at the military hospital in Uzsitsi, and was captured by Austrian forces and taken as a prisoner to Belgrade. In accounts for *The Sphere*, she told of brutality at the hands of the Austrian troops. Eventually, she was released to the Scottish Women's Ambulance Unit in Hungary.

Findmypast staff have also researched the story of Grace Sanders. She was born in 1888 in Shenley, Hertfordshire. Although she was labelled an 'invalid' at a young age, when the First World War broke out she joined the military effort, eventually becoming a member of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). She rose to the rank of controller, and saw active duty in France. She received the OBE in 1919.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The much-missed Simon Wills

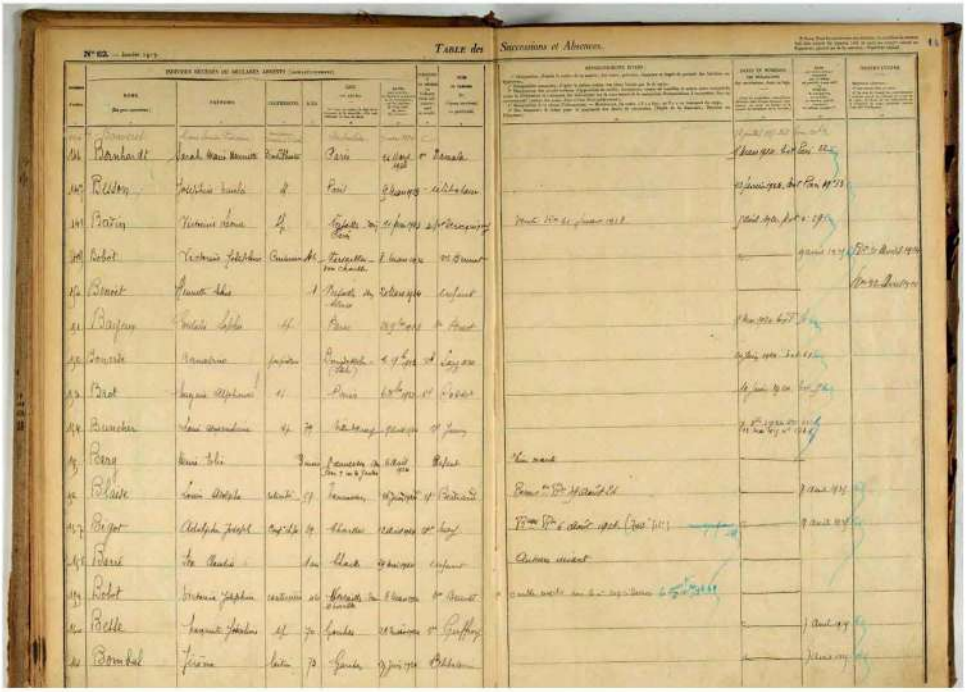
Maritime historian Simon Wills succumbs to illness

After a long illness, maritime historian Dr Simon Wills sadly died on 7 October. He was a prolific author and regular contributor and friend to the magazine, and will be greatly missed. As a maritime expert he was called on to research a number of *Who Do You Think You Are?* episodes, and appeared in Cheryl's and Liz Carr's episodes. As well as seafaring articles and books, Simon wrote on the history of health and disease. He was also a keen traveller, birder and wildlife photographer. He was a joy to work with, always looking for the story and the history behind everything.

USAF Colonel Gail Halvorsen in 1962

Fold3 adds late USAF officer's huge collection

Military records site Fold3 (**fold3.com**) has released more than 30,000 documents, newspaper clippings, photos and videos owned by United States Air Force Colonel Gail Halvorsen (1920–2022), known as the 'Candy Bomber'. Colonel Halvorsen gained fame for dropping sweets over West Berlin during the Berlin Blockade (1948–1949). The site, which is owned by Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) and available to Ancestry 'All Access' subscribers, digitised the material in partnership with Halvorsen's family.



Actor and director Sarah Bernhardt's 1923 death record

MyHeritage releases French death records

Family history website MyHeritage (myheritage.com) has added a major collection of 26,398,683 French death records, dating from 1890–1970.

The record set, 'Tables of Successions and Absences', lists records of deceased and missing people kept by different local departments in France.

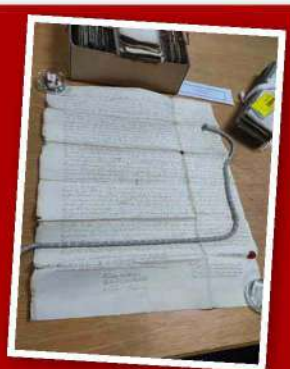
It is an important way of tracing French ancestors where the official death records are not available online.

The record set is searchable by name, and digitised images of the original documents are included as well.

The deaths of a number of famous people are featured in the collection. They include Sarah Bernhardt (born 1844), the most celebrated French stage actor of the 19th century. The death record gives her full name as Sarah Marie Henriette Bernhardt, and says that she died in Paris on 26 March 1923. It gives her profession as "*Directrice de théâtre*", which translates as "Theatre director".

The records also include the name of the deceased person's spouse, whether they were still alive or had predeceased them. Bernhardt was married to the French-Greek actor Aristides Damalas, known in France as Jacques Damala, who died in 1889. His surname is recorded as "Damala" on the record.

CAN YOU HELP?



Don't miss this opportunity to help TNA transcribe wills

Volunteers who can transcribe wills online are being sought for a new research project. 'The Material Culture of Wills: England 1540–1790' is a collaboration between The National Archives at Kew (TNA) and the University of Exeter, and funded by the charity the Leverhulme Trust. The organisers say that the aim of the project is "to reveal how ownership of, and attitudes towards, objects changed", adding that it will "lay foundations for future initiatives to widen access to TNA's manuscripts". A sample of 25,000 wills from the period, held at TNA, will be transcribed – they have already been transcribed automatically by optical character recognition, but the volunteers will check the accuracy of those transcriptions and provide their own transcriptions where necessary. You can join the project on Zooniverse: **zooniverse.org/projects/hjsmith/the-material-culture-of-wills-england-1540-1790**.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Children at the Foundling Hospital

Records from the Foundling Hospital released online

An extensive collection of records from London's famous Foundling Hospital is now free to search online.

Almost 100,000 pages of documents, containing details of more than 20,000 children, are available at Coram Story (**coramstory.org.uk/the-foundling-hospital-archive/**). The website celebrates the work of the hospital, which still exists today as the charity Coram.

The hospital was founded in 1739 by sea captain and philanthropist Thomas Coram to provide a home for the capital's many unwanted children, particularly infants who were born to unmarried mothers.

The digitised records, which cover 1739–1898, include petition letters from people applying to have a child admitted, and registers following children's lives throughout the hospital from when they first arrived. They can be searched by name, and include transcriptions carried out by participants in our Transcription Tuesday 2021 event.

The physical records are included in the wider Foundling Hospital Archive at The London Archives (**thelondonarchives.org**), but are now only available digitally to preserve the original documents.

The archive is the culmination of the five-year project 'Voices Through Time: The Story of Care'.

UK museums database launched

A new website that aims to provide a free database of all of the UK's museum collections has been launched. The Museum Data Service (**museumdata.uk/**) already has 3,129,798 records from 21 museums, and aims to hold more than 100 million records from 1,750 museums and collections. It is a collaboration between Art UK, the Collections Trust and the University of Leicester, funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies and the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The site is "an exemplary and world-leading piece of digital heritage infrastructure," said AHRC chair Prof Christopher Smith.

The homepage of the new website

64

The number of historic films of expeditions by the American Wildlife Conservation Society that are now available online (**tinyurl.com/awcs-films**)

Seventh cousin once removed

Country-music icon Dolly Parton's relationship to her pop-star goddaughter Miley Cyrus, according to Ancestry (**tinyurl.com/msn-dolly-miley**)

4,896

The number of Devon parish records that have been added to **findmypast.co.uk**

Brontë

The memorial plaque to authors Charlotte, Emily and Anne Brontë at Westminster Abbey has been amended to include the diacritical mark (**tinyurl.com/guardian-bronte**)

Baseball

A reference to the sport being played in Surrey in 1755 has been found in a diary (**tinyurl.com/bbc-base**)

St Marylebone Workhouse, London, c1903

Speakers sought for genealogy conference

Genealogists are being invited to speak at the next family history conference from the educational charity the Halsted Trust (halsted.org.uk), in autumn 2025.

The trust's fourth conference, entitled 'Secrets & Lies: More Hidden Voices of Our Ancestors', will take place on 19–21 September 2025 at the Holiday Inn, Peterborough West.

The trust said, "We invite passionate speakers to submit lectures on a wide array of topics relating to family history and the 'hidden' lives of our ancestors."

The organisers are interested in topics including crime; bigamy, divorce and marriage breakdown; Victorian 'fallen women'; LGBQTIA+ relations; the police; social deprivation; women's history; institutions such as schools, workhouses and children's homes; migrant forebears; and end of life.

The trust is also interested in hearing about "innovative approaches to researching 'black sheep' ancestors" in addition to "new genealogical resources".

Talks should last a maximum of 50 minutes, and each one will be followed by a Q&A session lasting 10 minutes.

Applicants should submit a short summary and biography, and a resumé of recent lectures.

The deadline for submissions is 31 January 2025. To take part, go to **secretlives.org.uk.**

GETTY IMAGES

The Joys Of Bath Night

Alan Crosby reminisces about trying to keep clean before running water was readily available in our homes

As a little boy my grandfather, born in the last years of Queen Victoria's reign, had to share a bed with his uncle George, his father's brother who lived with them in their tiny house in inner-city Manchester. Seventy years later, Grandad, talking to me about his childhood, remembered this all too vividly: in his words, George "didn't smell too tasty". George would then have been about 35 years old. Fast-forward to the 1930s. George, by now in his mid-60s, was still living with them; he was, in the phrase of the time, "a bit simple", and couldn't look after himself. My mother remembered him no less vividly – he was "a very dirty man".

The rest of the family tried to be clean, given their circumstances. The house had only cold water, so on bath night pans and kettles were heated up. In the back room, where everybody did everything since the icy-cold front room was kept sacred for special occasions, the tin bath was placed in front of the fire, and towels were warmed on the airing rack. The youngest child bathed first, followed by the others

The tin bath was placed in front of the fire, and towels were warmed

in ascending order of age, then the women (oldest first) and finally the men. In between times the water was warmed up a little with further kettles and pans, but when the men had their turns it was inevitably lukewarm and scummy.

I remember all this from personal experience, because as a child we often visited my grandparents in Manchester, and we still bathed in the ancient tin bath in front of the blazing coal fire. An exciting extra was that at the close of proceedings my father and grandfather picked up the heavy bath of cold, dirty water and took it outside to the backyard. There they would use the contents to swill down the sooty flagstones of the yard, the water disappearing under the back gate into the ginnel (or alleyway) that ran behind the rows of terraced houses.

My grandparents didn't have a bath when we were there – I guess it was rather embarrassing for them to be seen in a state of semi-undress, and in any case the water would have been cold and dirty. I think that normally they had a bath every fortnight, especially since as they grew older the sheer hard labour of it all became increasingly difficult to manage. When, at the end of the 1960s, their house was demolished in a vast slum-clearance scheme, they were resettled on a new estate at the edge of a small town in Cheshire. For my grandparents that represented paradise, but for my ever-practical grandmother the best bit was having, for the first time in her life, a bathroom equipped with hot and cold running water.

I, in contrast, had loved the whole 'tin bath experience', but I was a small boy, and it was so very different from our usual bathtimes. We lived in suburban Surrey, in a bungalow with a bathroom, and hot and cold running water. That was much less interesting! But of course, I didn't have to lug the heavy bath from its storage place, hung up on a hook out in the yard, and I had the luxury of nearly hot and fairly clean water, being only No. 2 in the order of bathing.

Back to Uncle George, and his boyhood in the early 1870s. He and his brother Alexander were the illegitimate twin sons of Mary, my unmarried great great grandmother, who was 30 when they were born. They lived in abject poverty in the middle of Manchester, and were lucky to have a roof over their heads. They had no tin bath, no kettles of hot water, scarcely any chance to wash at all. For poor George there was no training in cleanliness, just as there wasn't for tens of thousands of others. Forty years later, they knew that he smelled bad, but it was too late to change his ways.

ALAN CROSBY lives in Lancashire and is the editor of *The Local Historian*

ILLUSTRATION WWW.SUEGENT.COM

Use AncestryDNA's Shared Matches tool to group matches into clusters

GETTY IMAGES

GET MORE FROM YOUR DNA TEST

Genetic genealogist **Debbie Kennett** shares 10 tips on how to use the latest DNA tools to work with your matches and grow your family tree

DNA testing is an incredibly powerful tool for the family historian. It can help us to verify our research, make connections with our cousins, and break through brick walls. DNA testing can also reveal surprise – and possibly unwelcome – discoveries, such as the existence of unknown siblings or the revelation that the father who raised you is not your biological parent. Most people start their DNA journey by testing with AncestryDNA (**ancestry.co.uk/dna**). The company has now tested more than 25 million people, giving it the largest database by far; in addition the website has a user-friendly interface, including good integration with family trees. However, when you're faced with a DNA match list full of names that you don't recognise, it can be daunting to know where to start. The following advice will help you to get the most value out of your DNA test.

1 Build A Tree

AncestryDNA works best if you attach a tree to your DNA results to get the benefit of the various features. You can either build your tree on Ancestry or, if you are using a family history program, you can upload a GEDCOM file. Build your tree back on all your ancestral lines for about five or six generations. It's important to include collateral branches in your tree, and to try wherever possible to trace those lines down to the present day. Your identifiable matches are most likely to be your third, fourth and fifth cousins – and the more of these cousins you can identify through your genealogy research, the easier it will be to assign your DNA matches.

2 Let The Online Tools Do The Heavy Lifting

AncestryDNA tries to automate the process of identifying matches with common-ancestor hints and the ThruLines feature. For these tools to work you need to have either a public or private but searchable tree linked to your Ancestry account. Although the hints need to be used with caution and are not always correct, their quality is improving all the time thanks to advances in AI technology. ThruLines now also incorporates genealogical records such as censuses and the 1939 Register. The more complete your tree is the more accurate the hints will be, and the better the algorithms will work. ThruLines is particularly powerful for researching recent generations on a branch line where the user-provided information is more likely to be accurate.

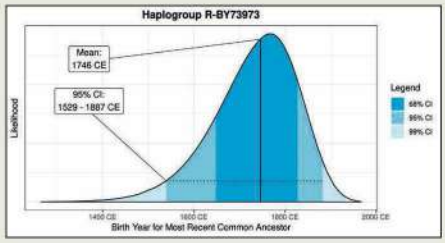
3 Work From Known Facts To Unknown Facts

Most people are now getting at least a few matches with easily identifiable relations such as second cousins or sometimes closer relatives. Confirming connections with known matches helps to verify your genealogical research. Your known relatives ▶

Help With Haplogroups

FamilyTreeDNA can reveal connections to celebrities and ancient peoples

Males who transfer their DNA results from AncestryDNA or MyHeritage to FamilyTreeDNA will not only have access to all of the features of the site's autosomal Family Finder test, but will now also receive information about their Y-DNA haplogroup.



This chart suggests dates for a common ancestor

The haplogroup indicates your position on the Y-DNA Tree of Mankind spanning over 200,000 years. Depending on the other people in the database, you may be given a report about an ancient haplogroup or a report about a haplogroup within a recent genealogical timeframe. You will be given a list of notable haplogroup connections with famous people and ancient connections with samples from archaeological sites. You can then join the relevant surname DNA project and look at the project's results page to see who else is in your haplogroup.

In some cases this may provide useful information about which Y-DNA genetic family you belong to for your surname. You won't, however, be given the names of any Y-DNA matches. For that you would need to order at the very least FamilyTreeDNA's basic 37-marker Y-DNA test. The more advanced Big Y-700 test is needed to access the full Discover features. The firm is also planning to launch an mtDNA version of Discover very soon, and its tests and transfers should have access to this new feature.

▶ are also the key to identifying your unknown matches. Once you have identified a match at AncestryDNA, link the cousin to your tree. The more cousins you link, the better the hint algorithms work. As you identify matches it helps to use the notes to record details such as the names of the common ancestral couple.

4 Cluster Your Matches

Use AncestryDNA's Shared Matches tool to group your matches into clusters. Start with a known relative such as a second cousin. Assign a coloured square to all of the matches who match you and your second cousin. These matches will all be related to you through that one specific set of great grandparents. Work your way down your match list repeating the process with your other matches until you've assigned squares to all of your matches sharing over about 30 centimorgans (cM). Work with one group of matches at a time, building out the trees of the matches in the cluster to see how they are related to you and the others in the cluster. The more matches you can place in your tree in each cluster, the easier it will be to assign new matches.

5 Research Your Matches' Family Trees

Make the most of matches that have no trees or minimal trees. Use your genealogical detective skills to identify your matches and build out their trees to work out the connection, having first identified through clustering whereabouts they are likely to fit into your tree. Check out profile pages for clues such as age and place of residence. For matches in England and Wales use the birth, marriage and death indexes, newspaper articles and probate indexes to build the tree backwards to the 1939 Register and the 1921 and 1911 censuses. See if you can identify the person on social media – sometimes it's possible to construct several generations of a family from public Facebook posts and friends lists. AncestryDNA's Pro Tools feature, which recently launched in the UK as a membership add-on, allows you to access an enhanced shared-match list so that you can see how your matches are related to each other. A mystery match with no tree will sometimes be a kit managed by a low-sharing son or daughter with an extensive tree.

Many of your matches will not have tested for genealogy. When messaging a match don't deluge them with requests for information but ask them if they can share the names of their grandparents, so that you can build out their tree.

6 Beware Of Small Segments

Focus your attention on your top matches sharing over 30 or 40 cM. These are the matches where you are most likely to find a connection. With smaller matches, particularly less than 15 cM, there is an increasing chance of false positives. Small matches like these should never be used as evidence of a connection, but can still be helpful for advancing your

GETTY IMAGES

AncestryDNA can provide clues about geographical links

Go On An Ancestral Journey

AncestryDNA can pinpoint an ancestral link to a particular county or town

AncestryDNA has a feature called Ancestral Journeys (previously known as genetic communities or regions) which is based on genetic networks of people who are connected through their DNA matches and who have ancestors from the same region. The journeys represent shared DNA connections within the past 200–300 years and provide a high degree of granularity, often down to the county level and sometimes even down to a specific town. The journeys are updated on a regular basis, so it's worth checking back every few months to see if any new ones have been added.

AncestryDNA's SideView technology means that journeys are divided into two parental sides, even if your parents haven't tested. If both of your parents have ancestry from the same part of the country then the journeys will be assigned to both sides. The journeys are particularly useful when searching for an unknown parent, and can provide a useful focus for your research. Similar features are also provided by both MyHeritage and 23andMe, although for people with ancestry from the UK and Ireland their genetic groups are less specific. However, MyHeritage is good at identifying genetic groups for some countries in continental Europe.

You can view separate data for each parental line

research. You may find that the small match has another relative who has tested who shares much more DNA with you, providing stronger evidence of a connection.

7 Fish In All The Ponds

Once you've mined your matches at AncestryDNA, you can also upload your results to other databases. While there is some duplication you will also find matches in these databases who have not tested elsewhere. You can download your raw data from AncestryDNA and upload it to MyHeritage (**myheritage.com**), FamilyTreeDNA (**familytreedna.com**) and Living DNA (**livingdna.com**) for free, although there is a small fee to pay at all these sites for full access to their features. MyHeritage has a database of more than 8.5 million people, coloured dots that allow you to sort matches into shared match clusters, and a feature called the Theory of Family Relativity to help you identify your matches. FamilyTreeDNA has a smaller database and fewer tools. If you are a male, by transferring your DNA you will get additional information about your deep ancestry on your direct paternal line with a haplogroup report (see box).

23andMe (**23andme.com/en-gb/**) has a large database of more than 14 million people, but the site does not accept transfers so you have to pay for a new test. Note that the firm is currently in severe financial difficulties, so you may decide against testing with it.

8 Be Wary Of Reported Biogeographical Data

All of the companies provide biogeographical ancestry reports in the form of percentage breakdowns by country or region. These reports are calculated by comparing tiny segments of your DNA with reference populations. Each website uses different reference populations and different algorithms, so you will get different results from each one. While the accuracy of these reports is improving and some sites now provide regular updates, don't expect the results to necessarily correspond with your own genealogical research. Be wary too of the low percentages from unexpected countries, so don't go looking for a Swedish ancestor just because 5 per cent of your DNA is assigned to Sweden. AncestryDNA, 23andMe and MyHeritage now also assign you to genetic groups or regions that are more informative for genealogical research (see box).

Although taking a DNA test is simple, the science behind it is anything but

Each website uses different reference populations and different algorithms

9 Exploit X-DNA Matches

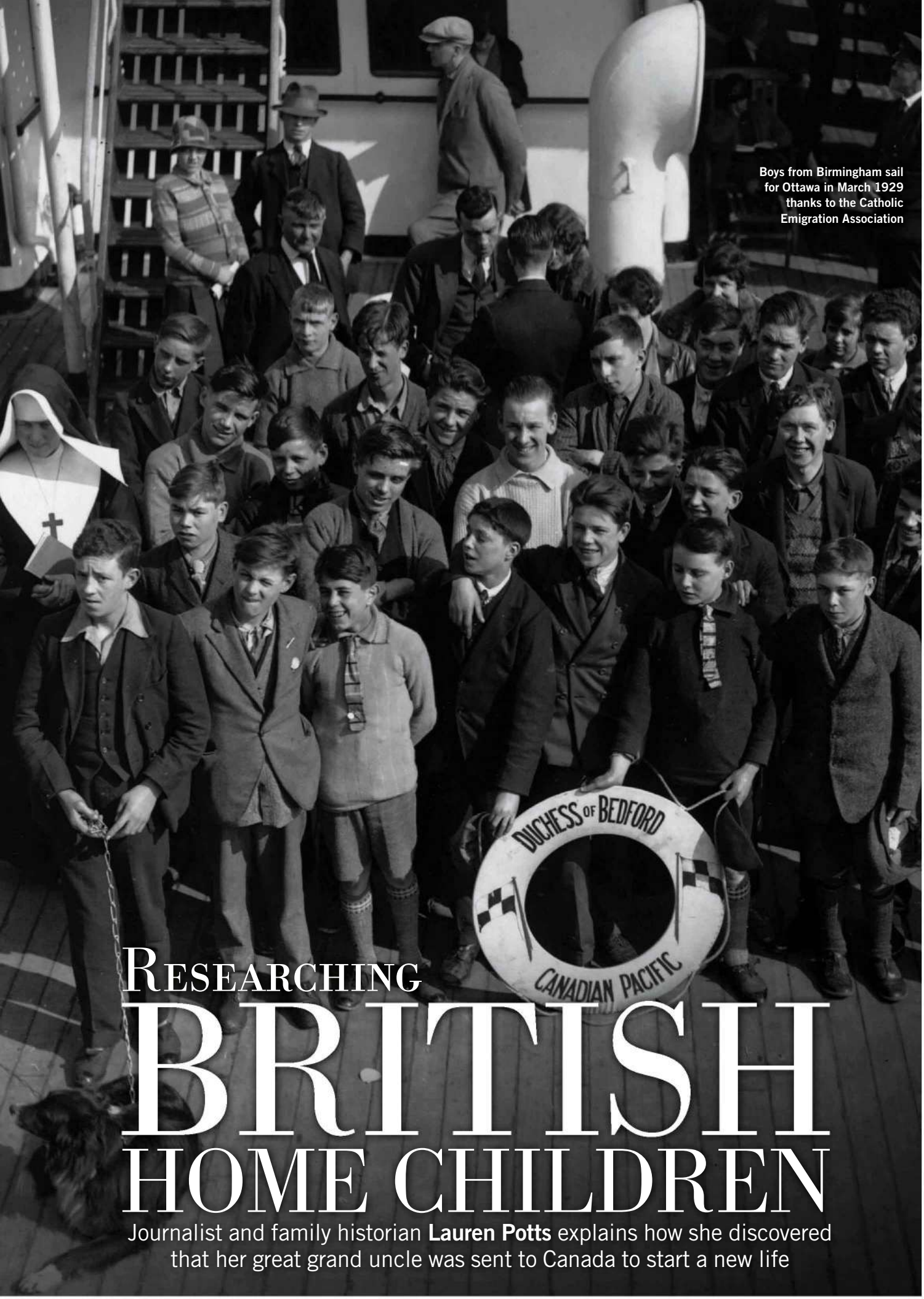
Females inherit X-chromosome DNA from both their mum and their dad, whereas males only inherit X-DNA from their mum. As a result X-DNA has a unique inheritance pattern and can narrow down the pool of matches to identify a connection, or provide additional information for verification purposes. However, X-DNA data is only provided by FamilyTreeDNA, 23andMe and third-party website GEDmatch (**gedmatch.com**).

10 Take A Y-DNA Test And An mtDNA Test

You could also supplement your AncestryDNA test with a Y-chromosome DNA test (males only) and/or a mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) test. You will need to order them from FamilyTreeDNA – the only company with a Y-DNA and mtDNA matching database. The inheritance of Y-DNA usually corresponds with the inheritance of surnames, making Y-DNA useful for exploring the direct paternal line. Y-DNA is passed on from father to son virtually unchanged, so the tests can make more distant connections going back to the start of genealogical records and beyond. If you're a female you can encourage a male relative to take a Y-DNA test on your behalf. MtDNA is passed on by a mother to both her male and female children, so males and females can test, and therefore provides information about the direct maternal line. While less useful for genealogy, mtDNA can sometimes be helpful if you have a specific hypothesis to test.

DEBBIE KENNETT is the author of *DNA and Social Networking* (The History Press, 2011)

GETTY IMAGES



Boys from Birmingham sail for Ottawa in March 1929 thanks to the Catholic Emigration Association

Researching BRITISH HOME CHILDREN

Journalist and family historian **Lauren Potts** explains how she discovered that her great grand uncle was sent to Canada to start a new life

GETTY IMAGES

A boy poses beside a stack of oats in Canada, c1900 – many Home Children were put to work on farms

For as long as I can remember, my parents have joked that our family tree has more in common with a stump than a sprawling oak. Both thought that their ancestors had more or less stayed in the same geographical area; my mum, for one, believed her relatives to be mostly Anglicans from Colne in Lancashire. So it was a surprise when I discovered her maternal grandparents both descended from Catholic immigrants who had left Ireland in the 1830s and 1840s and settled in Bradford, West Yorkshire. Perhaps they emigrated in search of a better life, but records suggest that they experienced otherwise. Census records showed that they lived mainly in the city's slums, while birth and death certificates recorded lives that began and ended in the workhouse.

My great great grandmother Mary Jane Boyes (née Rosser) is a prime example: born in a workhouse, and died at a Little Sisters of the Poor – an institution for elderly paupers run by the Catholic Church; lived repeatedly at Bradford's workhouse, and gave birth in two others. Frequently pregnant by an elusive husband who never appeared on the census with her, she seemingly raised their four children alone.

It was while researching her son John Boyes – my great grand uncle – that I uncovered the scale of the family's hardship. And not only that, but also the tragedy of a child taken from his poverty-stricken mother, then shipped abroad as part of a mass-emigration scheme to rid the UK of poor and orphaned children.

John first appeared on the 1891 census alongside Mary Jane and his sisters Annie, Mary Jane junior and Mary Ellen, and was recorded as having been born in Blackburn in 1889. But none of the entries in the birth indexes on the General Register Office's (GRO's) website (**www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content)** matched his details and there was no trace of him in the 1911 or 1921 census, only a possible entry in the 1901 census, living with a foster mother.

A Brick Wall Smashed

Nine months later, the brick wall started to crumble. Instead of searching the GRO for John plus name variants, I searched only by surname, which revealed a Patrick Boyes born in Blackburn in 1889. I performed a general search for Patrick Boyes on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**), and achieved my first family history eureka moment: Canadian military papers that listed Annie as his sister.

I knew that I'd linked Patrick to my family, but had no idea why: were he and John the same person? Was he a brother or perhaps a twin? If they were one and the same, why did his name change? And how on earth did he end up in Canada?

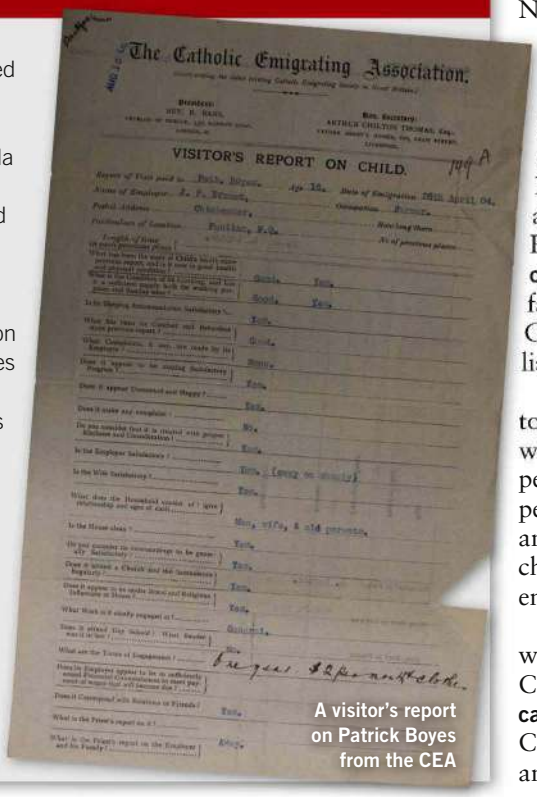
My next port of call was the website of Library and Archives Canada (LAC; **library-archives.canada.ca/eng/**) to search its Home Children database, where I found an entry for Patrick that gave ▶

Catholic Emigration Association

The history of the organisation that sent Patrick to Canada

The Catholic Emigration Association (CEA) formed in 1904 and amalgamated numerous similar schemes. Many were created on the premise of preventing Catholic children being sent to Canada without religious provision. Liverpool Catholic Children's Protection Society was the first to send a cohort to Canada in its founding year of 1881 and others followed, including Father Berry's Homes in Liverpool, whose manager was Arthur Chilton Thomas. Then considered the authority on emigration, he oversaw the unification of schemes to form the CEA, whose work was under the control of the Catholic children's rescue societies in the dioceses of Westminster, Southwark, Birmingham and Liverpool.

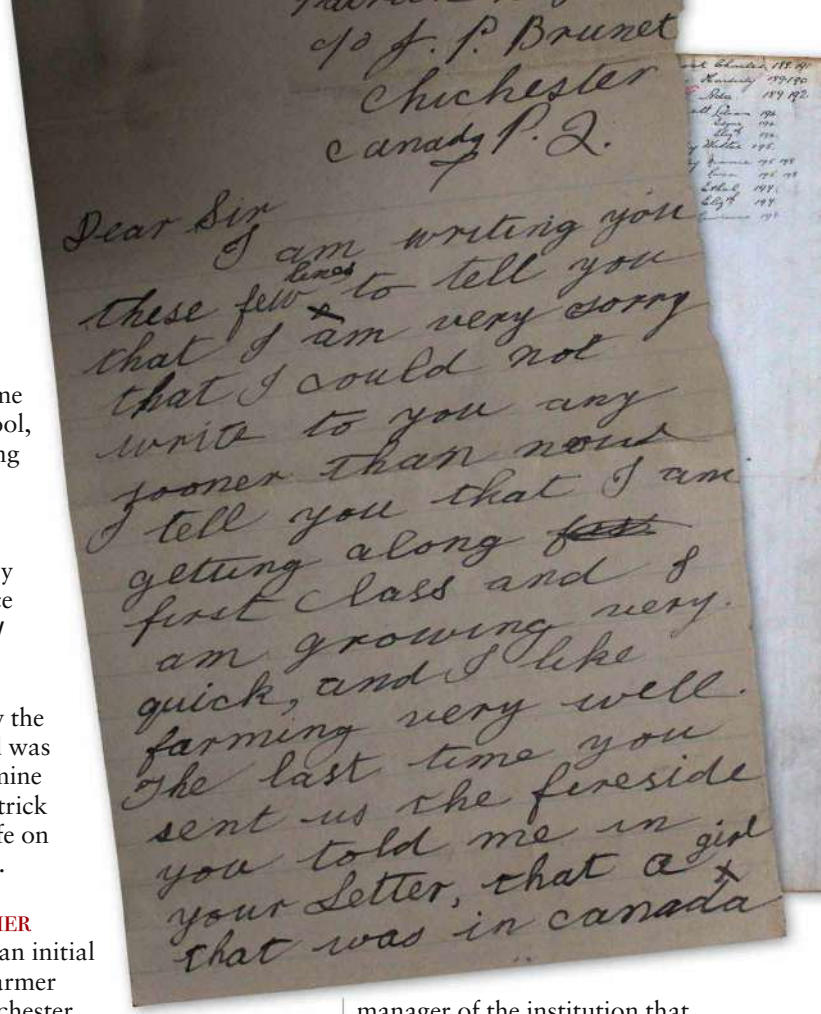
However, government documents suggest that the CEA began to question the benefit of sending children to Canada by the early 1930s. Many records were returned to England and destroyed, but some are at Liverpool Record Office (**liverpool.gov.uk/libraries/archives-family-history/**), while lists and reports are also available on the website of Library and Archives Canada (**library-archives.canada.ca/eng**).


The Catholic Emigrating Association.

VISITOR'S REPORT ON CHILD.

A visitor's report on Patrick Boyes from the CEA

GETTY IMAGES / LIVERPOOL CENTRAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES



his date and location of birth as Blackburn in 1889, and his ship's departure and arrival dates.

Armed with this information, I located him in Ancestry's collection 'Canada, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1865–1935', leaving Liverpool on the SS *Bavarian* in April 1904 and listed as one of 11 workhouse residents destined for St Vincent's Home in Montreal, as part of a resettlement programme that was run by the Catholic Emigration Association (see box).

Such schemes were not uncommon. According to the Canadian charity Home Children Canada (**britishhomechildren.com**), some 100,000 youngsters were sent to the country from Britain between 1869 and 1939 by charities and religious organisations to reduce the numbers of children in their care.

Patrick was one such child. LAC's website showed that he had been sent abroad as part of a collaboration between the Bradford Board of Guardians, who had adopted him in 1900, and Father Berry's Home in Shaw Street, Liverpool, where he had been living since 1903.

It also revealed that documents about his emigration were held by Liverpool Record Office (**liverpool.gov.uk/libraries/archives-family-history/archives-liverpool-record-office/**). I asked to view the material in person, and was rewarded with a gold mine of letters written by Patrick himself, detailing his life on a farm in rural Quebec.

Placed With A Farmer

Patrick was placed for an initial one-year term with a farmer called JP Brunet in Chichester, about 90 miles north-east of Ottawa. In his first letter to the manager of the institution that he'd left behind, the 15-year-old described the apparent novelty of "getting good food and everything" at his new home. Three days later, he wrote again to say he was very happy, had been taught how to "drive horses", and was having "lots of fun" building fires with another boy there.

"[Mr Brunet] never gives me any hard work… I feel settled now and don't feel a bit lonesome," he continued. "I close my letter with a good heart."

A month later he described having learnt to "team horses" as well as saw wood, in addition to a strong sense of having adopted Canada as his home.

"I have left the mother country but I am under a new country, under the maple leaf flag… and I am sending you the emblem of the country in which I will stand and protect," he wrote.

Regular visits by UK authorities showed that Patrick stayed on the farm for three years. A report in 1905 noted his chief work was "choring" and he "seems very happy and contented". The following year's report described the farm as "a very good home", and revealed that Patrick was "a strong healthy boy". Indeed, in a letter he wrote that year he said he was "growing very quick"

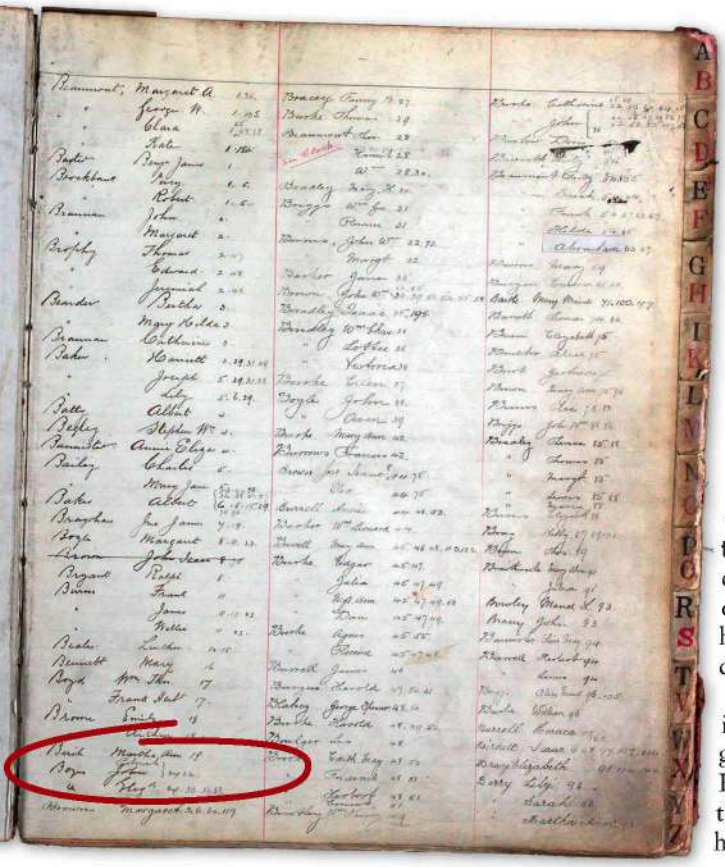
The Canadian Expeditionary Force

The First World War saw the creation of a force that enabled Canadians to sign up

Prior to the First World War, Canada relied on the British Army and the Canadian Militia. When war was declared in 1914, the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) was formed as part of the British Expeditionary Force. Many who enlisted were first-generation immigrants from the British Isles, and took the opportunity to see their homeland again and fight for the British Empire. The CEF grew to four infantry divisions that saw action in France and Belgium. Although it was effectively disbanded in 1919, more than 630,000 men and women served in the CEF, 424,000 of them overseas.

The service files of those who served with the CEF are available at Library and Archives Canada and searchable in the 'Personnel Records of the First World War' section of its website (**www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/personnel-records.aspx**). The database provides an image of the individual's attestation paper and a link to digital images of all their service documents. These files are also available in Ancestry's collection 'Canada, World War I CEF Personnel Files, 1914–1918' (**ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/61084**).

GETTY IMAGES / LIVERPOOL CENTRAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES



Above left: Patrick's revealing letter from 1906; above: the register that proved Patrick and John Boyes were one and the same

adding "I like farming very well". He even expressed a lack of desire to return home. "You told me in your letter that a girl that was in Canada got to be of age and she drew all her money and went back to the old country… you need not think that you will have me over there because I am used to [this] country."

Patrick's final report in 1907 described him as a "fine young fellow" in a "very good home", who appeared happy and did not complain. However, Home Children Canada cautions against taking the content of letters written by Home Children at face value, because they were often vetted. But the charity's president Lori Oschefski says the consistency of Patrick's comments suggest he might have been one of the lucky ones. If they were genuine, they reflect a brief period of happiness, sandwiched between a difficult childhood and a shocking tragedy yet to come.

A Soldier's Sacrifice

Intending to make good on his pledge to serve his new country, Patrick joined the 38th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in 1915. According to his record in Ancestry's collection 'Canada, World War I CEF Personnel Files, 1914–1918', he was found fit for service in Bermuda before returning to England in June 1916. I like to think he was briefly reunited with his family before going onwards to France – because five months later, on 18 November, he was considered killed in action. It's not known where he died – his file simply says "France or Belgium" – but a War Diary available on the website FromThePage (**fromthepage.com**), where historic documents are transcribed by online volunteers, suggests that his battalion was at Pozières during the Battle of the Somme.

Reading about Patrick's life in his own words was a real gift. To trace his journey from Bradford's slums to Canada then the battlefield has been heartbreaking and bittersweet.

It's also needed determination, lateral thinking and straight-up sleuthing. In the end I scoured every page of Bradford Poor Law Union's Children's Registers (1898–1909), held by the West Yorkshire Archive Service and on Ancestry, to prove whether John and Patrick were the same person.

John featured in multiple entries, spending years pinballing between various children's homes, but there was one that finally tied the names together: the name "John" had been crossed out and replaced with "Patrick".

Perhaps John was just a nickname – I'm unlikely to ever know, just as I'm unlikely to ever find a picture of him. There are none in my family collection, and both LAC and the Canadian War Museum (**warmuseum.ca**) confirmed they don't hold one. Still, I harbour a faint hope of finding one, just as I hope the posthumous medals sent to his mother might one day surface.

But how fortunate I have been to find out anything about Patrick at all – it would have been so easy for his life to go unrecorded and untold had I not discovered his letters, unread for more than a century in a box in Liverpool.

LAUREN POTTS is a family historian and freelance journalist specialising in features and digital content (**clippings.me/laurenpotts**)

Resources

Take your research further

ARCHIVE

LIVERPOOL RECORD OFFICE

a **3rd Floor Central Library, William Brown Street, Liverpool L3 8EW**
t 0151 233 5883
w **tinyurl.com/lro-fam-hist**

Lauren found letters that Patrick sent from Canada at LRO. It's important to remember that plenty of documents in local archives are not yet online, and an archive may offer a research service to help you trace your relation in their records.

WEBSITES

ANCESTRY

w **ancestry.co.uk**

Browse free and subscription-based collections, including Poor Law records and passenger lists, to get a broad sense of your ancestor's past.

FINDMYPAST

w **findmypast.co.uk**

In February 2024 the site added 39,000 records of Home Children sent from Britain to Canada. Three very useful collections are free to access: 'Canada, Home Children Inspection Reports' (1913–1932); 'Canada, Home Children Board of Guardian Records'; and 'Lancashire, Liverpool, Children Sent to Canada 1883–1925'.

HOME CHILDREN CANADA

w **homechildrencanada.com/registry**

This free registry of Home Children is different to LAC's (see below). The charity both catalogues stories and adds individuals to the list who family historians have discovered were Home Children.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

w **library-archives.canada.ca/eng**

A treasure trove if you have Canadian relatives, LAC's website includes military records such as the personnel files of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. It also contains information about Home Children and how to access files if they are not held by the service.

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?®

TRY A ONE MONTH FREE TRIAL

To the digital edition

Tap here for your **FREE TRIAL**

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google play

If you love family history, then why not have *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine*, the UK's best-selling family history magazine publication, delivered straight to your computer, tablet or smartphone? With a digital subscription to *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine* you can enjoy our easy-to-follow advice and news of the latest online releases wherever you are.

Have *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine* Delivered Straight To Your Device

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google play

Simply Tap The Logo Below To Try A Free Trial To The Digital Edition

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

'My Tree Includes Scandal, Royalty And Romance'

CELEBRATING YOUR DISCOVERIES

From poverty, tragedy and an epidemic to a hellraiser, a hero, royal links and servants who fell in love, Rachel Chávez's family history has a huge variety of dramatic stories, as **Claire Vaughan** reveals

Rachel Chávez's story begins with a carefully drafted family tree that has been passed down through her family. At the top, bold calligraphy proclaims "Pedigree of the Family of Nassau", and beneath this a coat of arms in blue and gold features two lions flanking a shield topped with a crown and leaf-like heraldic symbols. A note states, "These Armorial Bearings were granted to William Henry Nassau, 1st Earl of Rochford." The name at the top of the tree is "Henry Frederick, Prince of Orange".

"Growing up, I always loved history and social history in particular," says Rachel, a sixth-form librarian from Dereham in Norfolk. "My interest started when my nana showed me this pedigree suggesting a link with Dutch royalty, along with some original certificates and photos, and some research one of my great uncles had done."

I have no idea how Sarah managed to keep her children safe from cholera

Rachel's great great grandparents Charles and Mary Ann Forney, pictured with their daughter Louisa

Rachel began trying to flesh out the stories of some of the individuals named in the documents and research she'd seen. "On my maternal side, there was a birth certificate for my great great grandfather, Edward Savage. On my paternal side, which my great uncle had looked into, the main surname was Preece." Rachel encountered her first brick wall when she found a couple on this line, Thomas and Eliza Jones, living in Hereford. "I was unable to pinpoint a marriage, so finding Eliza's maiden name was proving impossible." So she looked up their children in the online birth indexes of the General Register Office (**www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content**), which list the mother's maiden name, and found it that way.

One of the individuals who really stood out for Rachel was her 3x great grandmother Sarah Sole. Sarah had married Edmond Sanders, a tailor 20 years her senior, and taken on his children, the youngest of whom was eight. The family lived at 41 Broad Street (now Broadwick Street), St James, Westminster, London. They were to find themselves at ground zero of a momentous event that changed doctors' understanding of infectious diseases, and saved many lives.

"As part of my research, I like to look online for the street names where ancestors lived. I did a search for 'Broad Street' with 'St James, Westminster' and 'history', and the first record that came up was from British History Online (**british-history.ac.uk**). It mentioned the cholera epidemic in the 1850s being linked to Broad Street. I found other written accounts and reports, including John Snow's cholera map."

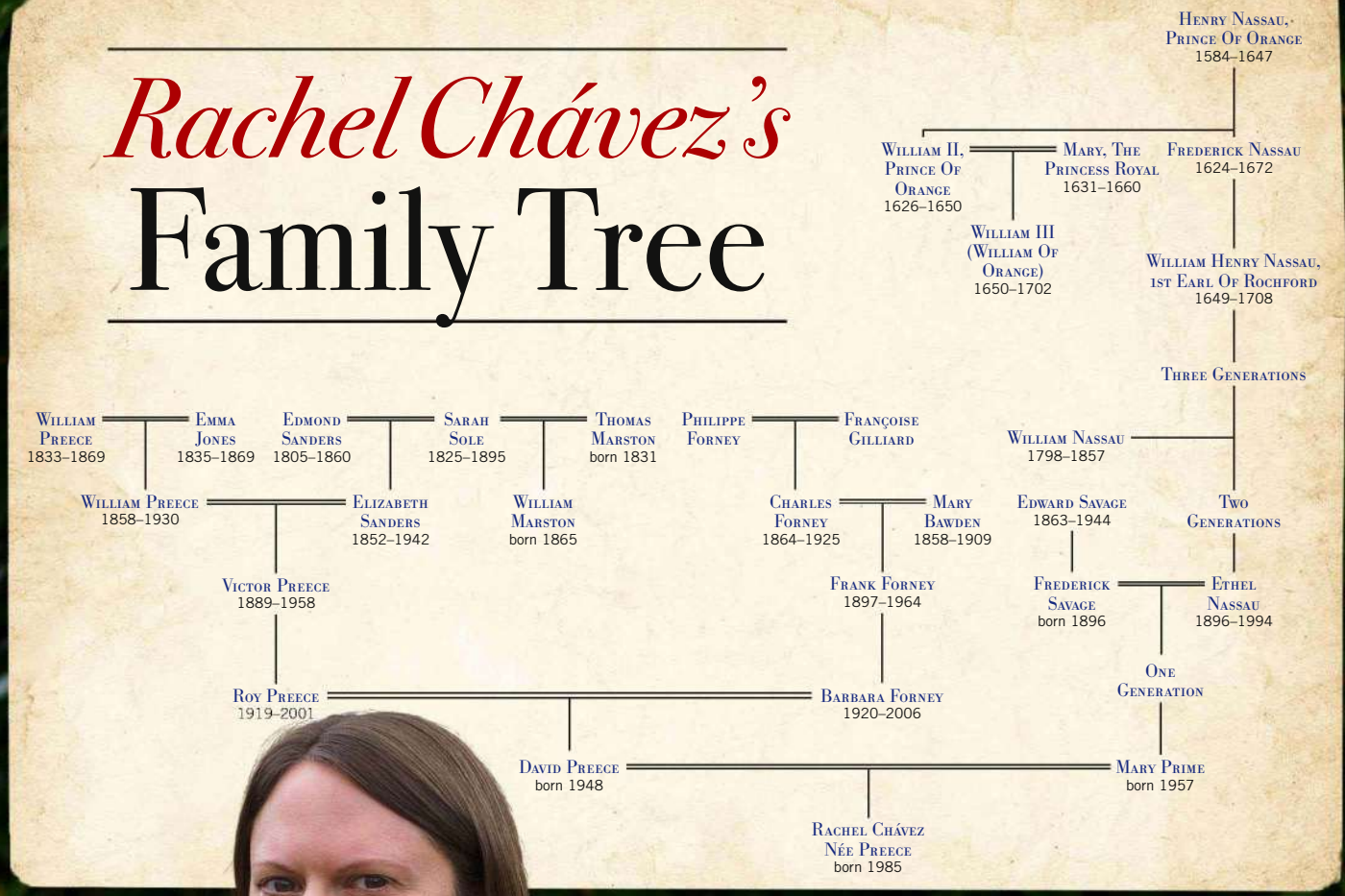
Cholera Hotspot

In the first half of the 19th century there were frequent cholera outbreaks in the capital, and in 1849 local physician and pioneering epidemiologist Snow published a paper, 'On the Mode of Communication of Cholera', which suggested that the disease was water-borne rather than being spread by bad air as was thought at the time. Tragically 616 people died of cholera near Broad Street in 1854, and a map he drew up shows a cluster of cases around a water pump right outside Sarah's front door. Investigations found that a leaky sewer was feeding into the drinking water drawn using the pump.

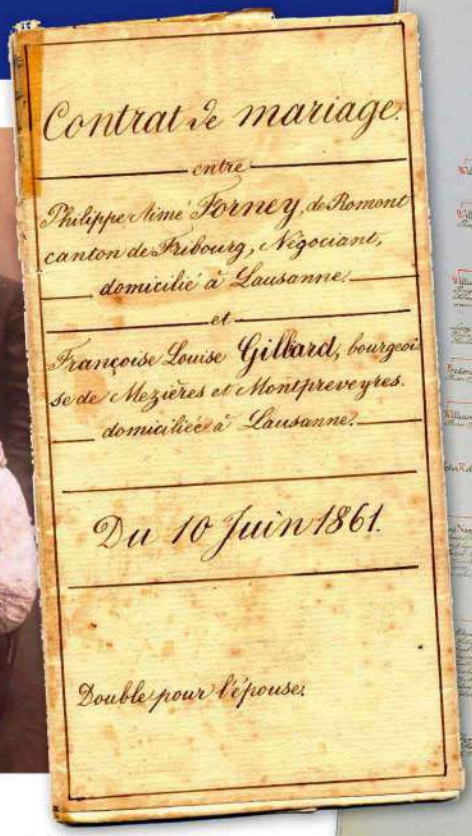
"I have no idea how Sarah managed to keep all of her children safe from cholera – it's remarkable. She lived through an extraordinary situation." ▶

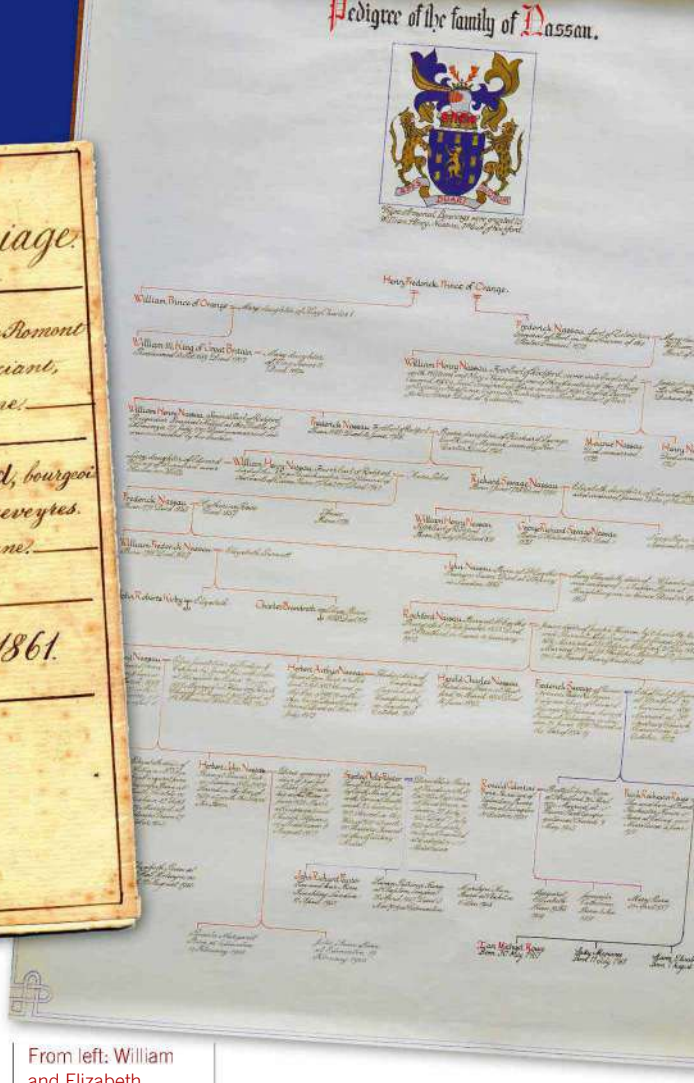
UNP/TONY BUCKINGHAM

Rachel Chávez's Family Tree



Rachel with *(inset, clockwise from top left)* William Nassau's 1857 death certificate, the book *Oranje-Nassau* and details of her Preece 3x great grandparents' burials





From left: William and Elizabeth Preece with some of their children; the record of Philippe and Françoise Forney's marriage; and the Nassaus' pedigree chart

In 1860, tragedy struck when a pregnant Sarah lost her 19-month-old son to tuberculosis (TB). Two months later her husband died, and two months after that she gave birth.

She married again in 1863, to Thomas Marston, a tin-plate worker, taking on her new husband's children and going on to give birth several more times. Altogether she had 22 children.

"I felt in awe of her when I saw how many children she had raised – and that she gave birth to 13 herself. Only two died. That was remarkable for the time."

Rachel searched for Thomas online, and found a connection to a Fulham firm called Marston Properties. "The company was set up by Thomas and Sarah's son William Marston in 1895, and is still trading to this day. Its website (**marston properties.co.uk/about/history**) revealed that when he was 14 William was apprenticed to his father, a plate-metal worker who made the breastplates for the Household Cavalry!"

Missionary Man

One of Sarah's daughters Elizabeth – Rachel's great great grandmother – married a William Preece. "I knew about him initially from my great uncle's research. I knew he was orphaned in 1869, but I didn't know the details. The family story was that he ran away, supposedly to India, worked on the railways and joined a Masonic lodge in Calcutta. He became religious, returned to England, married and worked for the rest of his life as a missionary for the Seamen's Christian Friend Society. I also knew that he had been awarded a Carnegie Hero Certificate for bravery."

She set about confirming as much of this as she could.

William's leg was broken when the excited horses trampled him

"William was orphaned the day before his 11th birthday, when both his parents died from TB within six months of each other.

"William next appears in the records on his marriage certificate, where he is described as a 'missionary to seamen'. He went on to head up the Seamen's Mission in Southwick."

Seamen's missions were a religious point of contact for local sailors, and William was the equivalent of a priest or vicar. He also worked at a mission at Whitehaven in Cumberland.

Rachel adds, "In 1922, he earned himself an honorary certificate and cash sum from the Carnegie Hero Fund Trust (**carnegieherofundtrust.org**)."

Rachel contacted the people who administer the trust fund to find out what William had done to earn this accolade, and they sent her a transcript of his entry on the roll of honour.

It seems that the horses pulling a carriage had bolted and he'd stopped them, saving the passengers. However, his leg was broken when the excited horses trampled him.

Rachel also knew that she had Swiss ancestry on her father's side in the shape of an ancestor called Philippe Forney. "My dad had a box of things including a copy of Philippe's marriage certificate – it's in French and quite long." Translating it, she gleaned that her 3x great grandparents Philippe and Françoise Forney (née Gilliard) were Swiss and had married in 1861 in Lausanne.

Digging further, Rachel found that their son Charles Forney had come to England and found work at a house called Hurstcroft

UNP/TONY BUCKINGHAM

UNP/TONY BUCKINGHAM

in Ascot, Berkshire. Here, he fell in love with Mary Bawden. "Finding records for him was fairly straightforward, because of his unusual name. Their marriage certificate told me that he was a butler and she was a cook, and both lived at Hurstcroft."

After they married, the couple left Hurstcroft and started their family right away, going on to have five children. The birth certificates showed the family's movements over the following years. By 1890 they had moved to Wood Green, Haringey, where Charles worked as a grocer for the rest of his life.

Reversal Of Fortune

By contrast, the pedigree chart that Rachel's nana showed her tells a story of how one branch of Rachel's family had it all, and then lost it – because of one man.

Close inspection of the tree revealed that Rachel also has links to the British royal family. "Henry Nassau at the top of the tree had a son called William II, also Prince of Orange, who married Mary, the Princess Royal, the daughter of Charles I. Their child became William III (William of Orange) – king of England, Ireland and Scotland." The lineage is also documented in Dutch historian Reinildis van Ditzhuyzen's book *Oranje-Nassau* (Akribeia Uitgevers, 2015), which Rachel found hugely helpful.

"Every individual I come across in my tree was a person, lived a life and had their own personal story," Rachel says

TELL YOUR STORY

Share your family story with us and you could appear in the magazine!

Please write to us at the address on page 6 or email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

So how does her family link to the Nassaus, and who is her gateway ancestor?

"Henry Nassau had an illegitimate child called Frederick Nassau, who was given the title Lord of Zuylestein (a place near Utrecht in the Netherlands). Frederick's son, William Nassau, came over to England with William III and his wife Mary II, and he was given the title of the 1st Earl of Rochford."

Six generations below him is Rachel's great grandmother, Ethel Nassau, who married Frederick Savage. But the fate of her branch of the Nassau dynasty was sealed back in 1798 with the birth of William Nassau. He was the son of Frederick, an illegitimate son of the 4th Earl, another William Nassau. He didn't get a title, but he did inherit the family's country estate, St Osyth Priory in Essex. Rachel came across an article about the Nassaus in *The Essex Review: An Illustrated Quarterly Record of Everything of Permanent Interest in the County*, and it goes into much detail about this William.

A Hellraiser's Huge Appetite

"William was described as a very turbulent and eccentric character. At one time he weighed around 26 stone, and had to have a piece cut out of the dining table at the priory to accommodate his stomach. There were stories about how he used to drive his carriage hell for leather around the village with streamers hanging off the sides. He raised exorbitant debts, then tried to take his own life and died a week later from the injuries. His children had to sell off the estate to pay off his debts. So we lost it all thanks to him!"

Despite her royal connections, Rachel is equally fascinated by the stories of even her most 'ordinary' ancestors: "Everyone is interesting – every individual I come across in my tree was a person, lived a life and had their own personal story. There's never someone that I would overlook."

Resources

These three sites made crucial contributions to the research

British History Online

w **british-history.ac.uk**

Often overlooked by family historians, this huge online repository holds almost 1,300 volumes of primary and secondary sources that can give context to your ancestors' lives, plus 40,000 images and vintage maps. Rachel used it to research the streets in London her ancestors had lived in.

General Register Office

w **www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content**

The birth index on the GRO's website lists the maiden name of the mother for each entry, which is very useful. Rachel cross-checked the birth entries for the children in one particular family on her tree, and used this to work out the maiden name of an elusive relative – Eliza Jones.

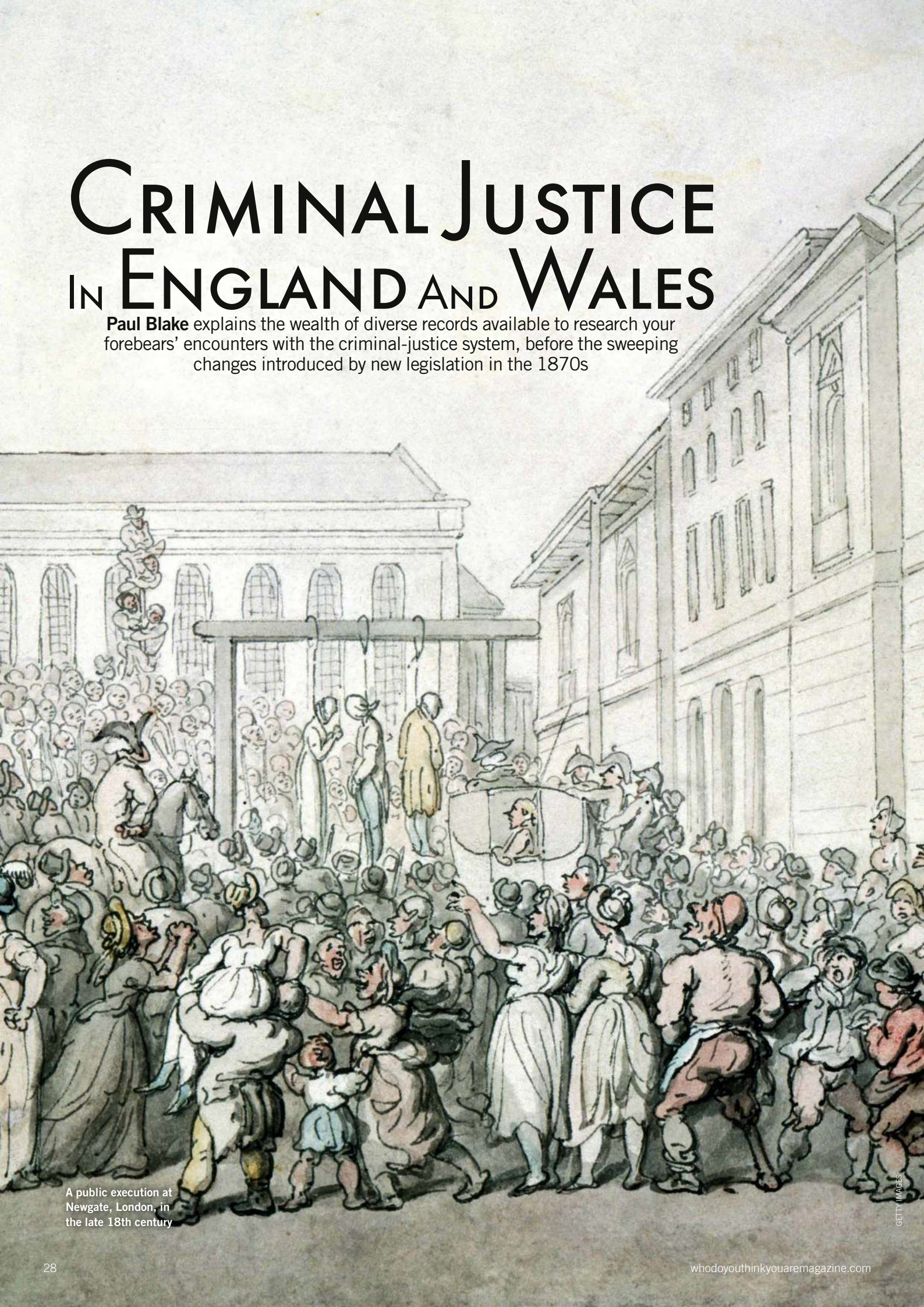
Internet Archive

w **archive.org**

Rachel uncovered relations who worked in several trades including tailors, grocers and bakers. To find out more about what these occupations entailed, she consulted an 1827 edition of *The Book of English Trades, and Library of the Useful Arts*, which is free from the Internet Archive (**tinyurl.com/BookofTrades**).

Criminal Justice in England and Wales

Paul Blake explains the wealth of diverse records available to research your forebears' encounters with the criminal-justice system, before the sweeping changes introduced by new legislation in the 1870s



A public execution at Newgate, London, in the late 18th century

GETTY IMAGES

The British legal system is viewed as one of the best and most independent in the world, having evolved for over a millennium. Searching the surviving records for criminal ancestors can be complicated and time-consuming. However, the potential results are possibly some of the most enthralling records you will ever encounter.

The Romans and Anglo-Saxons had their own ways of dealing with crime and administrating justice, which were almost entirely handled at a local level. Following the Norman Conquest, little changed. The manorial courts were the backbone of local justice, but began to lose their importance with the introduction of quarter sessions, although were not finally abolished until 1977. Surviving manorial records are detailed on the Manorial Documents Register, available through Discovery, the online catalogue of The National Archives at Kew (TNA): **discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/manor-search**.

It was during Henry II's reign (1154–1189) that there was any real consideration of the nation as a whole for the first time, and the seeds of today's system of justice were sown. Common law was introduced for the whole country, replacing local laws and customs. The royal treasury (the Exchequer) and permanent royal courts – the Court of the King's Bench, and the Court of Common Pleas – were established in Westminster as part of Henry's thorough reorganisation of royal justice throughout the country and across all classes, from freemen to the highest-ranking nobles.

Note that Scotland and Ireland both developed legal systems distinct from England and Wales, and the countries' records will be found in their respective national and local archives.

The King's Bench

The Court of the King's (or Queen's) Bench was the highest court of common law in England and Wales, with jurisdiction over both criminal and civil actions. The relatively few criminal cases were dealt with on the 'Crown Side', and civil cases on the 'Plea Side'. It was

George Jeffreys, 1st Baron Jeffreys 1648–1689

Paul explains why the 'Hanging Judge' may not deserve his notoriety

Jeffreys is now better known as the infamous 'Hanging Judge'. He came from a family of considerable note, his legal career starting in 1676 when he became solicitor general to the Duke of York and Albany, later James II. By 1683 he had become lord chief justice of the King's Bench, and in 1685 lord chancellor, gaining an early reputation for numerous perverse decisions.

It was his actions in 1685 that gave rise to his historical notoriety. Jeffreys was sent to the West Country to conduct the trials of those who had participated in the failed rebellion of James Scott, 1st Duke of Monmouth, against the new king James II. Of the 1,381 found guilty of treason, as many as 700 are estimated to have been executed, although in reality the number was probably somewhat less.

At the time, the law required the death penalty for those convicted of treason, along with around another 50 crimes, and Jeffreys' judgments were commensurate with the law. James II's refusal to use his option of commuting the sentences did nothing to help Jeffreys' reputation.

A portrait of George Jeffreys from c1680

From the late 17th century, more and minor crimes became punishable by death, under what became known as the 'Bloody Code'. By 1765 the total number of capital crimes was about 160, compared with 50 in 1688. The number continued to increase, to roughly 225 by 1815 – although many people charged with capital crimes received a conditional pardon from the Crown, or a lesser sentence.

Enlightenment in the mid-19th century saw the number of crimes punishable by death rapidly diminish. The death penalty was finally abolished in the UK in 1969 with an exception for treason, which remained a capital offence until 1998.

How To Research Criminal Forebears

Paul reveals the key steps for finding a relation in The National Archives' records

1 Check The Criminal Registers

These registers, on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) and Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**), mention that David Ford and John Portingall were tried for sheep-stealing at the assizes in Wiltshire in 1806, and hanged.

County	Crown & Gaol Books	Indictments	Depositions	Other
Sussex	1734-1948 ASSI 31 1626-1971 ASSI 32	1559-1688 ASSI 33 1689-1950 ASSI 34 1951-1971 ASSI 35	1812-1971 ASSI 36	ASSI 34, ASSI 36, ASSI 39, ASSI 90
Wilts	1818-1945 ASSI 11	1668-1971 ASSI 12 1652, 1688 ASSI 88	1862-1971 ASSI 13	ASSI 15, ASSI 88
Westmor	1714-1875 ASSI 41 1718-1810 ASSI 42	1677-1870 ASSI 44 1877-1971 ASSI 91	1615-1870 ASSI 45 1877-1971 ASSI 92	ASSI 43, ASSI 46, ASSI 47, ASSI 53, ASSI 86, ASSI 89
Wilts	1706-1971 ASSI 21 1670-1824 ASSI 23	1729 ASSI 25 1801-1971 ASSI 25	1861-1971 ASSI 28 1951-1959 ASSI 92	ASSI 24, ASSI 90, ASSI 92
Worcs	1657-1971 ASSI 2 1667-1951 ASSI 3	1662-1971 ASSI 3	1719-1971 ASSI 6	ASSI 4, ASSI 8, ASSI 10, ASSI 80, ASSI 83

2 Research The Court's Records

TNA's guides will reveal the records available for the court in question. Here, 'Criminal court cases: assize courts 1559–1971' (**tinyurl.com/tna-guide-assizes**) notes the material available for Wiltshire's assizes.

3 View Your Relation's Records

In addition to the indictment, the accused will be listed in the Crown and gaol books. You may find further useful and interesting records, such as the depositions (witness statements) – an example is above.

GETTY IMAGES

the ultimate court for all criminal cases, supervising the lesser courts.

From 1876, the court became the King's Bench Division of the High Court.

The records of the King's Bench are held by TNA, but unfortunately there are few finding aids, or indexes or catalogue references to names. The records have been digitised by the University of Huston, Texas, USA, and are freely available to view (browse only) at its website the Anglo-American Legal Tradition: **aalt.law.uh.edu**.

TNA's research guides 'Court of King's Bench records 1200–1702' (**tinyurl.com/tna-guide-bench-1200-1702**) and 'Criminal court cases: King's/Queen's Bench 1675–1988' (**tinyurl.com/tna-guide-bench-from-1675**) provide more information about the court's function and surviving records.

Groups of justices travelled to all parts of the country to preside over local actions

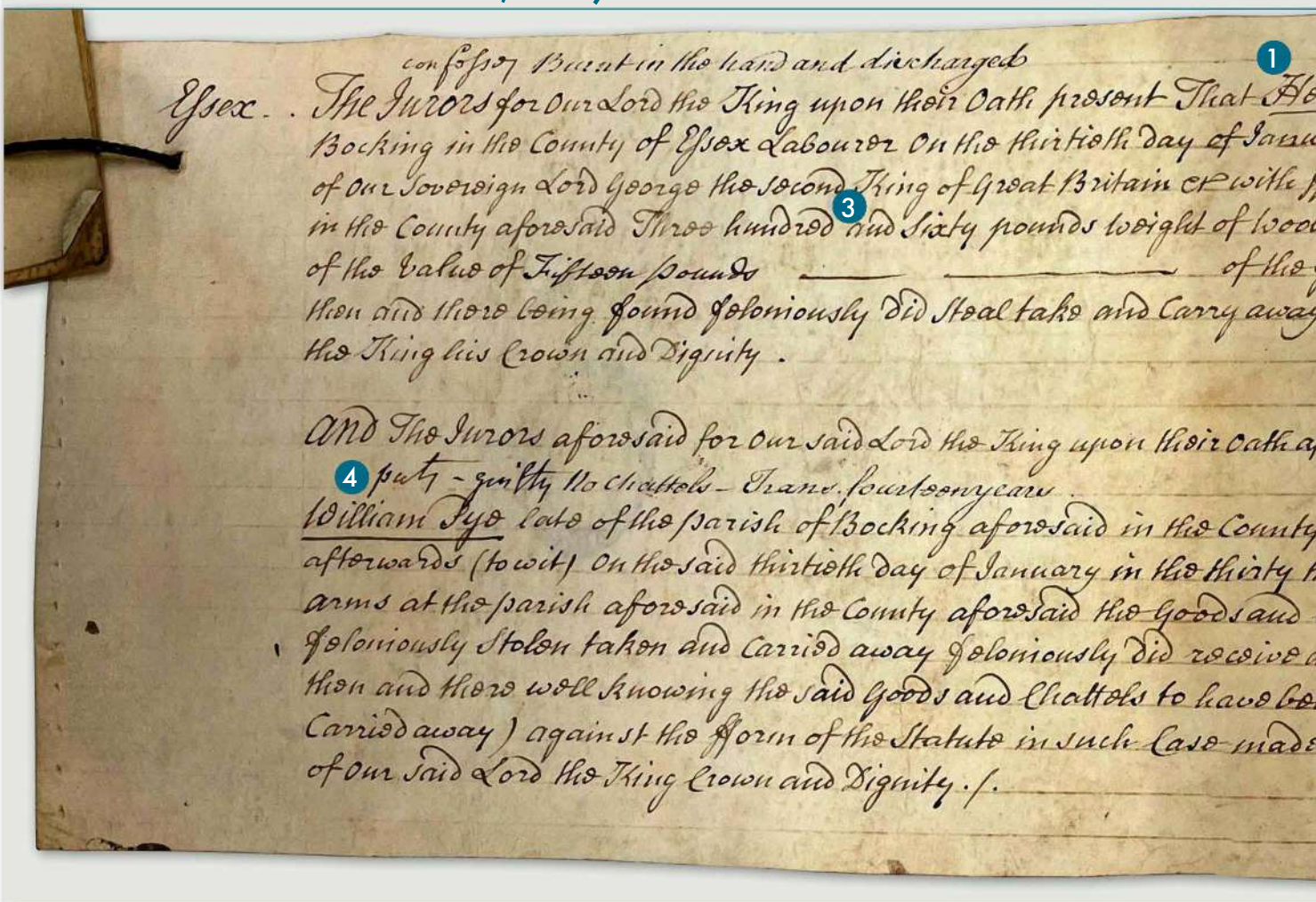
Common Pleas

The Court of Common Pleas existed to hear civil disputes between individuals, and often vied for business with the King's Bench. Further courts dealing exclusively with civil affairs were created in the following centuries. These included the Courts of Wards and Liveries; Requests; Exchequer of Pleas; and Chancery.

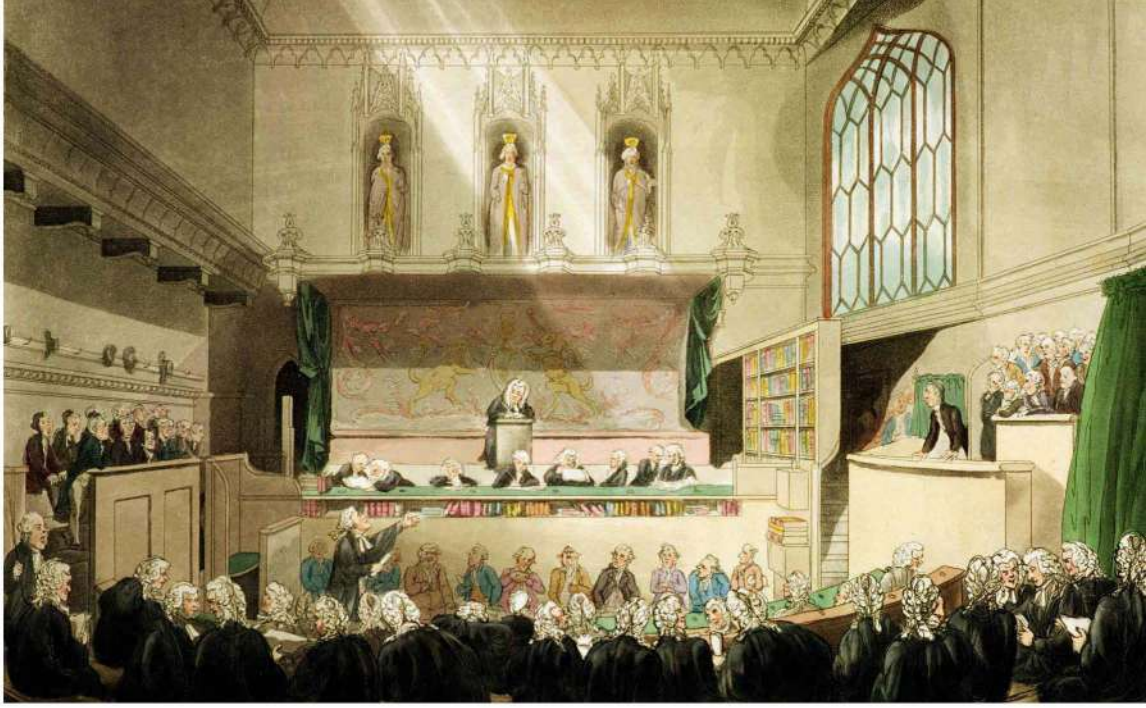
General Eyres

In addition, from the late 12th century until 1374 itinerant courts known as general eyres were sent from Westminster. Small groups of justices (judges) travelled to all parts of the country, except Durham and Chester, to preside over local actions. Counties were grouped into circuits, which the justices visited at irregular intervals. Surviving records cover 1194–1348. TNA's guide 'Courts of law records from the medieval period: general eyres 1194–1348' explains how to search for and interpret the surviving records: **tinyurl.com/tna-guide-eyres**. These are almost entirely in Latin, as are most official records up to 1733. David Crook's book *Records of the General Eyre* (Public Record Office, 1982) provides a detailed listing.

Indictment, 1760


confessor Burnt in the hand and discharged
1
Essex. The Jurors for Our Lord the King upon their Oath present That He
Bocking in the County of Essex Labourer On the thirtieth day of Janu
of Our Sovereign Lord George the second King of Great Britain &c with
in the County aforesaid Three hundred 3 and Sixty pounds weight of wool
of the Value of Fifteen pounds ——— ——— of the
then and there being found feloniously did Steal take and Carry away
the King his Crown and Dignity.

And The Jurors aforesaid for Our said Lord the King upon their Oath a
4 puts - guilty No Chattels - Trans. fourteen years
William Tye late of the parish of Bocking aforesaid in the County
afterwards (to wit) On the said thirtieth day of January in the thirty
arms at the parish aforesaid in the County aforesaid the Goods and
feloniously Stolen taken and Carried away feloniously did receive
then and there well knowing the said Goods and Chattels to have be
Carried away) against the Form of the Statute in such Case made
of Our said Lord the King Crown and Dignity./.



An illustration of the Court of the King's Bench from the beginning of the 19th century

GETTY IMAGES

Star Chamber

Another court, the Court of Star Chamber, functioned between 1485 and 1642. It met at Westminster Hall and presided over a wide range of cases, from public disorder to murder and witchcraft. Comprehensive details of the court and its records are given in TNA's research guide 'Court of Star Chamber records 1485–1642' (**tinyurl.com/tna-guide-star-chamber**), and the names of plaintiffs and defendants can be searched using Discovery.

By the early 17th century, the court system had become much less complicated. The majority of criminal cases brought to court for trial were being heard either by the assize courts or by the quarter or petty sessions (see below). The division of cases between these courts was fairly arbitrary – generally, if it was a capital offence it went to the assizes, and the lesser cases to the quarter sessions. In general, neither court can be searched by the names of the defendants or others involved in the case.

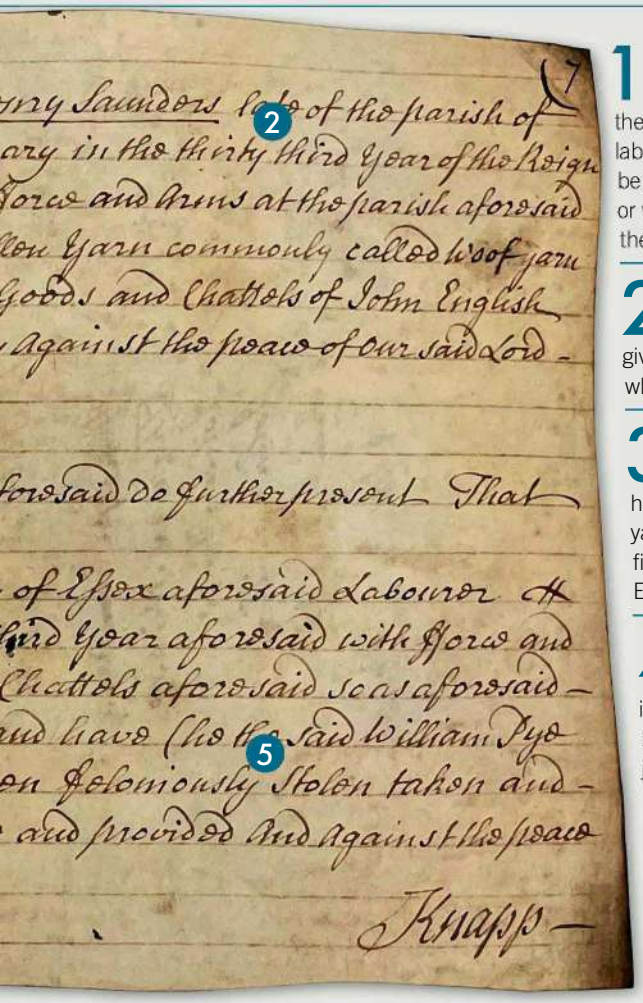
Most importantly, the system of criminal justice in London and Middlesex differed significantly from the rest of the country, and was in many ways more complicated. Essentially, there were no assizes per se, and felons and miscreants were usually tried at the City of London sessions or at the Middlesex sessions.

Assize Courts

The general eyres were replaced by pairs of commissioners of assize or circuit judges from the central law courts in Westminster. They went on circuit around the country, usually twice a year, visiting about 50 provincial towns, trying prisoners in gaol on criminal charges. By the 19th century, except in the northern counties, this had increased to four sittings.

Records cover 1559–1971, when the assizes were replaced by the Crown courts. Survival is very patchy: for example, most Elizabethan assize records were destroyed, and those for the Midland circuit

This indictment from an assize held at Chelmsford, Essex, is among the records of the Norfolk and Home Counties circuits held at The National Archives (**nationalarchives.gov.uk**; ASSI 94/926). It is not available digitally



1 Henry Saunders

Two people are named on the indictment, the first being Henry Saunders, described as a labourer of Bocking in Essex. This is more likely to be where he was taken, rather than where he lived or was born. Since he confessed, he was "burnt in the hand and discharged" (recorded top left).

2 Thirty Third Year

The place and date of Saunders' arrest are given with the regnal year of the king, George II, which converts to 1760.

3 Crime

Saunders' crime involved stealing "three hundred and sixty pounds weight of woollen yarn commonly called woof yarn of the value of fifteen pounds", which was the property of John English.

4 William Pye

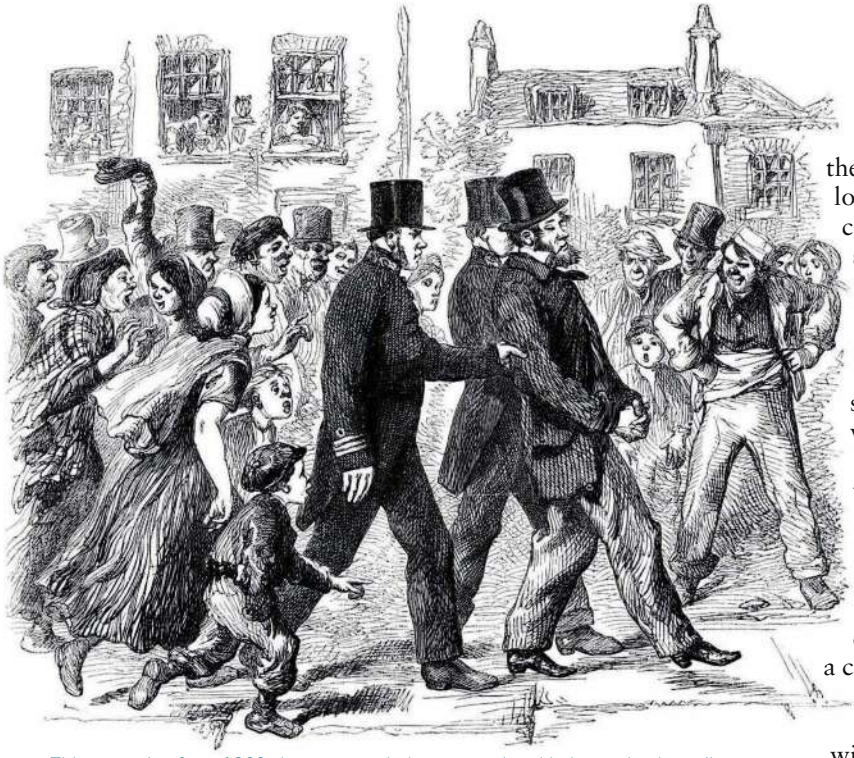
The second person named on the indictment was also a labourer and also of Bocking. Pye's punishment, which is recorded just above his name, was somewhat harsher than the one Saunders received: having been found guilty, Pye was to be transported for a total of 14 years, which at this time would have meant being sent to America.

5 Feloniously Stolen

Pye received the goods, knowing them "to

DID YOU KNOW?

Until it was banned in 1772, a defendant who refused to plea might suffer *peine forte et dure* – torture in which weights were placed on their chest until they cooperated.



This engraving from 1862 shows a man being arrested and led away by the police

▶ do not commence until 1811. All surviving assize records are held at TNA, and no collections are available online. Records that may be available for each case include indictments (details of the offence, with plea and verdict), Crown minute books, depositions (witness statements) and calendars of prisoners. TNA's unmissable research guide 'Criminal court cases: assize courts 1559–1971' includes keys to surviving records arranged by county: **tinyurl.com/tna-guide-assize-1559-1971**.

In Wales, serious offences were tried at the Court of Great Sessions, the equivalent of the assizes in England; the exception is Monmouthshire, which was included in the Oxford assize circuit. The records of great sessions are at the National Library of Wales; a database is at **crimeandpunishment.library.wales**.

In 1830, the Court of Great Sessions was abolished, and the Welsh counties and Chester were brought into the general circuit system.

Quarter Sessions

Magistrates' courts had their origins in the Anglo-Saxon moot courts and the manorial courts, but were officially created in 1285 during the reign of Edward I. From 1363, justices of the peace (JPs) – usually wealthy landowners with no legal training – held their own courts four times a year (at Easter, Trinity, Michaelmas and Epiphany). These quarter sessions became a vital part of the legal system.

Over time, the power and jurisdiction of the justices gradually increased. On the whole they dealt with the less serious criminal cases (eg poaching, vagrancy and assault), but were still able to impose sentences of death or transportation. Civil disputes could also fall within their responsibilities.

Surviving documents are in local record offices, and very few are online. You can use Discovery to find material from archives across the UK, although the local archive's own catalogue might be slightly more up to date or complete.

Petty Sessions

By the late 1600s summary courts were being held, where men and women often first went to law. The justices 'summarily' – ie with no jury – made immediate decisions about a case. They could dismiss it; punish the petty offenders with a fine, a whipping or commitment to a house of correction; or see the cause progressed to the assizes or quarter sessions. During the early part of the 18th century, these courts became known as petty sessions. By the end of the century they were instituted in most parts of the country, although few records were kept or survive.

Other Sources

Finally, there are two more very useful ways to research court proceedings. Criminal registers record all those tried at the quarter sessions and the assizes, whether guilty or acquitted. They end in 1892; the earliest date from 1791 for Middlesex, and from 1805 elsewhere. Held at TNA, they are searchable on both Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/1590/**) and Findmypast (**bit.ly/fmp-eng-wales-criminal**). You can also check the local newspapers on the British Newspaper Archive (**britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk**), which began to come into their own in the 1750s and may be more informative than the court records themselves.

TOP TIP!

The exact jurisdiction of each court was ill defined, especially between the assizes and quarter sessions. You may need to search more than one court for your case.

PAUL BLAKE is a genealogist specialising in Gibraltar research. He is also the author of several books including *Tracing Your Insolvent Ancestors* (Pen & Sword, 2019)

Resources

Take your research further

BOOKS

A History of Criminal Justice in England and Wales
John Hostettler
Waterside Press, 2009
Hostettler covers the major developments, from Anglo-Saxon dooms to the creation of common law and today's criminal-justice system.

Crime and Punishment in England: A Sourcebook
Andrew Barrett and Christopher Harrison (eds)
Routledge, 1998
This collection of primary material from the 10th to the 19th centuries features the words of the authorities, criminals and their victims.

Jackson's Machinery of Justice, 8th Edn
JR Spencer
Cambridge University Press, 1989
An online edition of this revised and updated version of RM Jackson's classic 1940 text is available.

Quarter Sessions Records for Family Historians: A Select List, 5th Edn
Jeremy Gibson
Family History Partnership, 2007
Despite its age this remains a useful guide, although individual record office catalogues or TNA's Discovery may provide extra or updated information.

WEBSITE

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
w **tinyurl.com/tna-guide-criminal-overview**
In addition to the guides recommended elsewhere, 'Criminal court cases: an overview' is essential, as well as 'Courts of law records held in other archives'.

GETTY IMAGES

GETTY IMAGES

Discover Gold

Imagine expert genealogy help at your fingertips. No more trawling the internet, only to find generic advice that just doesn't quite answer your specific question! Go Gold and dive into a library of over 100 educational videos, with more added each week. Plus, enjoy access to experienced specialists in:

- Military history, including all the armed forces
- Palaeography, unlock the secrets to deciphering handwriting across the ages
- Brick wall busting with our Ask the Expert Forum

Hone your family history skills and get to know your ancestors better with our unique Gold Membership. Find out more: **www.sog.org.uk/join**.

Colourised photograph from the SoG's Kipling Special Collection

Society of Genealogists

www.sog.org.uk

Investigate your ancestors, discover your unique family history and connect with fellow genealogists

DON'T MISS THE WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? NEWSLETTER

Get essential updates from the world of family history with our **FREE** email newsletter, delivered to your inbox every week

KEEP UPDATED!
Don't miss out on important family history news

Latest News
Accurate, in-depth coverage of the week's biggest record releases and genealogy news

Family History Tutorials
Learn how to master basic skills or take your research further with our genealogy tutorials, packed with top tips and expert advice

Latest Offers
Discover our round-up of new deals and discounts for family historians – helping you save money

Real Stories
Read extraordinary real-life stories that our readers have uncovered while researching their trees

GETTY IMAGES

SIGN UP TODAY BY VISITING
whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com
SCROLL DOWN TO FIND OUR 'SIGN ME UP' BOX

THE POLICE

This photo of officers at Lewisham Police Station was taken in 1845

Since the 1600s a vast range of groups have protected our streets, says **Jonathan Scott**

Policing was once the civic duty of unpaid watchmen, constables or justices of the peace (JPs). While being a JP came with some prestige, the unpaid constable was not a popular position. In 1663 Charles II ordered the creation of paid watchmen to patrol the streets, but the pay and standard of policing were poor. Later, private law enforcers, known as thief-takers, had a reputation for corruption. Then came the Bow Street Runners, a force of six professional officers employed by the Bow Street Magistrates' Court in the City of Westminster, London, formed in 1749 by magistrate Henry Fielding.

In Scotland, Glasgow City merchant John Stenhouse appointed a small group of policemen in 1800. Then in 1829 the home secretary Robert Peel created the Metropolitan Police or Met, a band policing an area up to seven miles from Charing Cross.

Soon boroughs and counties were given the right to organise their own policing, but many did not. This changed in the wake of the 1856 County and Borough Police Act, which made it compulsory for every area to have a force.

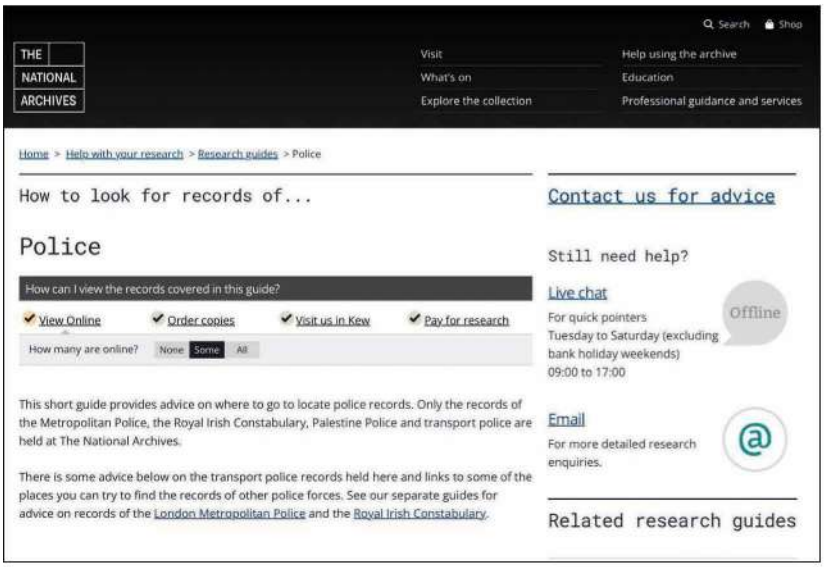
GETTY IMAGES

BRITISH TRANSPORT POLICE HISTORY GROUP

w **www.btphg.org.uk**

The roots of the British Transport Police (BTP) predate the formation of the Met. At this time, there were several privately run groups of men who were responsible for overseeing individual railways, docks and canals, which would eventually combine to form the modern BTP. This specialist history group holds a collection of staff record cards dating back to the 1860s, and its website includes research guidance and advice. The site also has details of honours, decorations and medals, and a roll of honour, recording deaths in the line of duty, as well as those who died in major conflicts. Meanwhile the BTP's own website includes a detailed history section: **btp.police.uk/police-forces/british-transport-police/areas/about-us/about-us/our-history**.

BEST WEBSITES



THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

w **nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/police/**

TNA's research guide is a great starting point for those new to the subject. Its holdings include records of the Met and the Royal Irish Constabulary. Clicking the link to TNA's dedicated guide for the Met will lead to staff records available both here and through commercial partners – many of the personnel records can be searched by name via TNA's catalogue Discovery (**discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk**). For other police records you will need to look to county or city archives, or the force might retain its own. For example, The London Archives – the former London Metropolitan Archives – looks after records of the City of London Police (**tinyurl.com/search-tla-city-lon-pol**).

POLICE HISTORY SOCIETY

w **policehistorysociety.co.uk**

Highlights here include a guide to researching police ancestors, and a links section that leads to museums, archives, research projects, transcriptions and indexes. You can also access free issues of the society's journal published over five years ago, which contain all sorts of interesting articles. For example the first volume, from 1986, includes a history of fingerprinting written by a retired police commander, while another describes the origins of the *Police Gazette* (see **whodoyouthinkyouaremagazine.com/tutorials/police-gazette**). There are also histories of regional forces. The second volume alone covers Croydon, Dover, Walsall and Leicestershire.

EXPERT'S CHOICE

Stephen Wade is the author of *Tracing Your Police Ancestors* (2009)

George Cruikshank's etching of a pickpocket in custody appeared in Charles Dickens' *Sketches By Boz* (1836)

Anyone who has researched police history in Essex will be familiar with the name Fred Feather. The former police sergeant's articles in a range of publications have provided a rich seam to explore in family and social history. As a solid resource behind him, he had the Essex Police Museum (**essex.police.uk/museum**) at Essex Police Headquarters in Springfield – he used to be its curator – which has one of the most enterprising and valuable sources for researchers into police history in its archive.

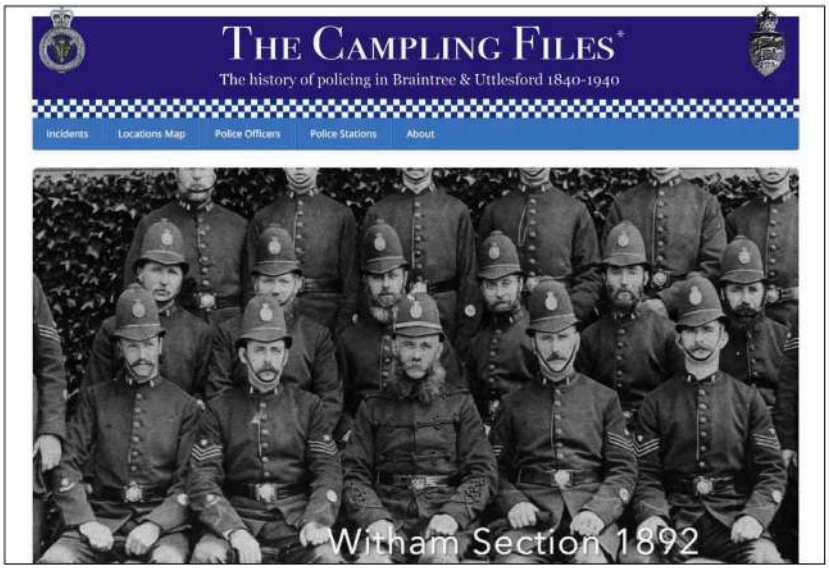
As a heritage location, the museum offers hands-on experience of past police practice and everyday work, and it includes the usual sensational material such as the death mask of Frederick Browne, who murdered PC George Gutteridge in the county in a notorious case from 1927.

In its research sources and materials, the museum can provide exactly the kind of real-life biographical sources that researchers need, and the range covered includes officers in the Essex County Constabulary from the 1880s to today, along with other specific locations of officers such as Southend and Colchester; there are even Second World War records, including those of female police auxiliaries.

The process of researching the careers of ancestors in the police entails often elusive and challenging routes to the facts, because there were so many different constabularies throughout the Victorian and early 20th-century periods. The incidence of particular events or topics such as misconduct often throw light on the nature of the occupation, but most records of service include these kinds of information, along with the usual details of rank, place of service and sickness.

You can find details of opening times on the website, plus a link to a valuable blog on Substack complete with fascinating cases from the archives and articles on such subjects as policing in Essex during the First World War.

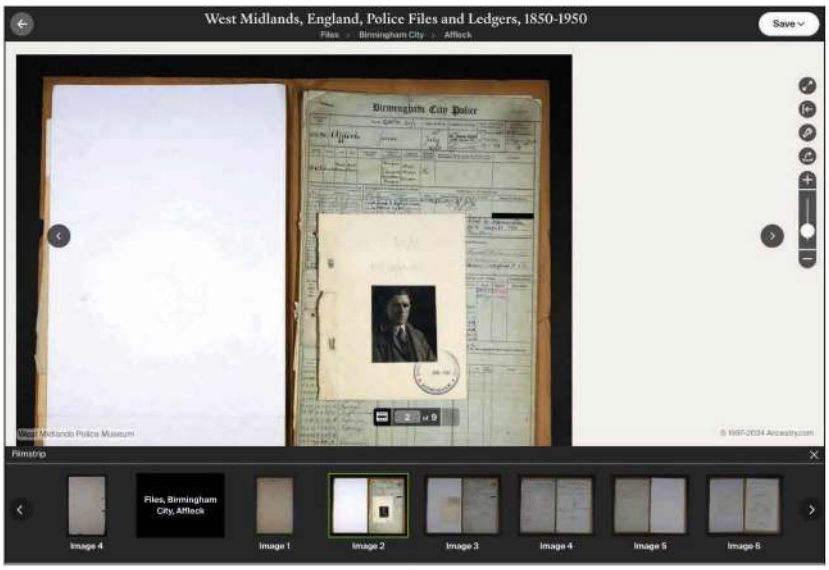
GETTY IMAGES



THE CAMPLING FILES

w **thecamplingfiles.co.uk**

This is a great example of the kind of fascinating online resource found via the Police History Society's links pages. The Campling Files, compiled by serving policeman Graham White, traces a century of policing in Braintree and Uttlesford in Essex. Graham started out editing pages on the British Newspaper Archive (**britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk**) and ended up reading the historic articles about police incidents, seeking to "understand the character of the men who policed the area before me… and the crimes they investigated". The result is a database of local police officers, stations, the incidents they were called to, and how these were reported.



ANCESTRY

w **ancestry.co.uk**

Ancestry has a massive number of police records from around the country. Its largest collection is the pension registers from the Metropolitan Police (1852–1932). These are packed with genealogically useful information including date and place of birth, address and next of kin. The West Yorkshire police collection (1833–1914) includes a range of records such as conduct books where you can see if your police ancestor was fined for (usually) being drunk on duty. The West Midlands collection (1850–1950) includes photographs in many of its officers' files (pictured above). Finally, there is an index to the Cardiff Constabulary registers (1904–1920).

GO FURTHER

Nine more websites that you can't afford to miss

FINDMYPAST

w **bit.ly/fmp-manc-pol**

Findmypast's collection 'Manchester Police Index 1812–1941' contains 10,636 records.

GLASGOW POLICE MUSEUM

w **policemuseum.org.uk**

The museum tells the story of local policing.

HERTS PAST POLICING

w **hertspastpolicing.org.uk**

This is a great resource for researching police history in Hertfordshire back to 1836.

INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE HISTORY OF CRIME, POLICING AND JUSTICE

w **open.ac.uk/arts/research/policing/resources**

The centre holds journals, newsletters and articles. Its site has a guide to regional archives.

LANARKSHIRE POLICE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

w **lphs.org.uk**

The LPS preserves local police history.

METROPOLITAN POLICE MUSEUM

w **tinyurl.com/met-police-museum**

This museum is located in Sidcup with visits by appointment only. Check the website to see details of its extensive holdings.

POLICE MEMORIAL

w **policememorial.org.uk**

The Police Remembrance Trust commemorates those who died in the line of duty.

SOUTH WALES POLICE HERITAGE CENTRE

w **tinyurl.com/swp-heritage**

Here you can explore the output of a First World War centenary project.

WORCESTERSHIRE POLICE HISTORY 1833–1967

w **tinyurl.com/sites-google-wph**

This site has a database of officers with names, years of service, and approximate birth years.

Nurses of the British Red Cross at Bar, Montenegro, c1915

First World War Medical Records

Phil Tomaselli explores a collection that you can access for free over the Remembrance weekend

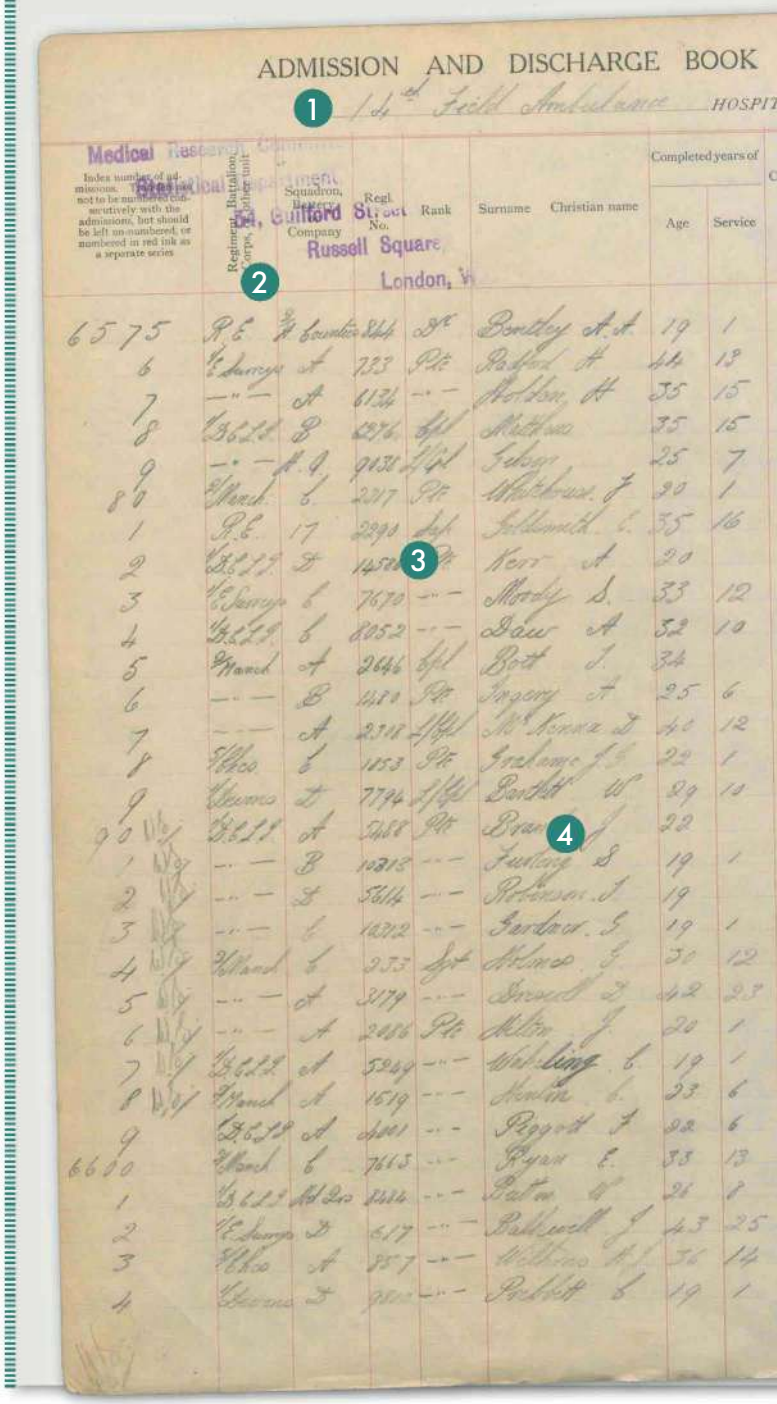
Family historians are all too aware how difficult it is to research our ancestors' service in the First World War, because so many records were destroyed in the Second World War during the Blitz. There were also a great number of military medical records kept during the First World War, but only a small number were preserved afterwards as a representative sample. The majority were destroyed in 1975, and one about one per cent remain. They are held by The National Archives at Kew (TNA) in series MH 106 – see the entry in TNA's online catalogue Discovery at **discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C10949**. These include admission/discharge registers and medical case sheets. The registers have been digitised on Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**) and will be free to access this year from 8-11 November. Indexes of the registers are also available on Forces War Records (**uk.forceswarrecords.com**).

Range Of Institutions

The registers cover hospitals, casualty clearing stations, field ambulances, an ambulance train and a hospital ship from different war theatres. They include many types of treatment centres on many fronts (including Salonika in Greece and Italy) as well as the home front, so there'll be some men here who didn't serve abroad so don't have Medal Index Cards (MICs). About 1.5 per cent of the total number of records relate to women.

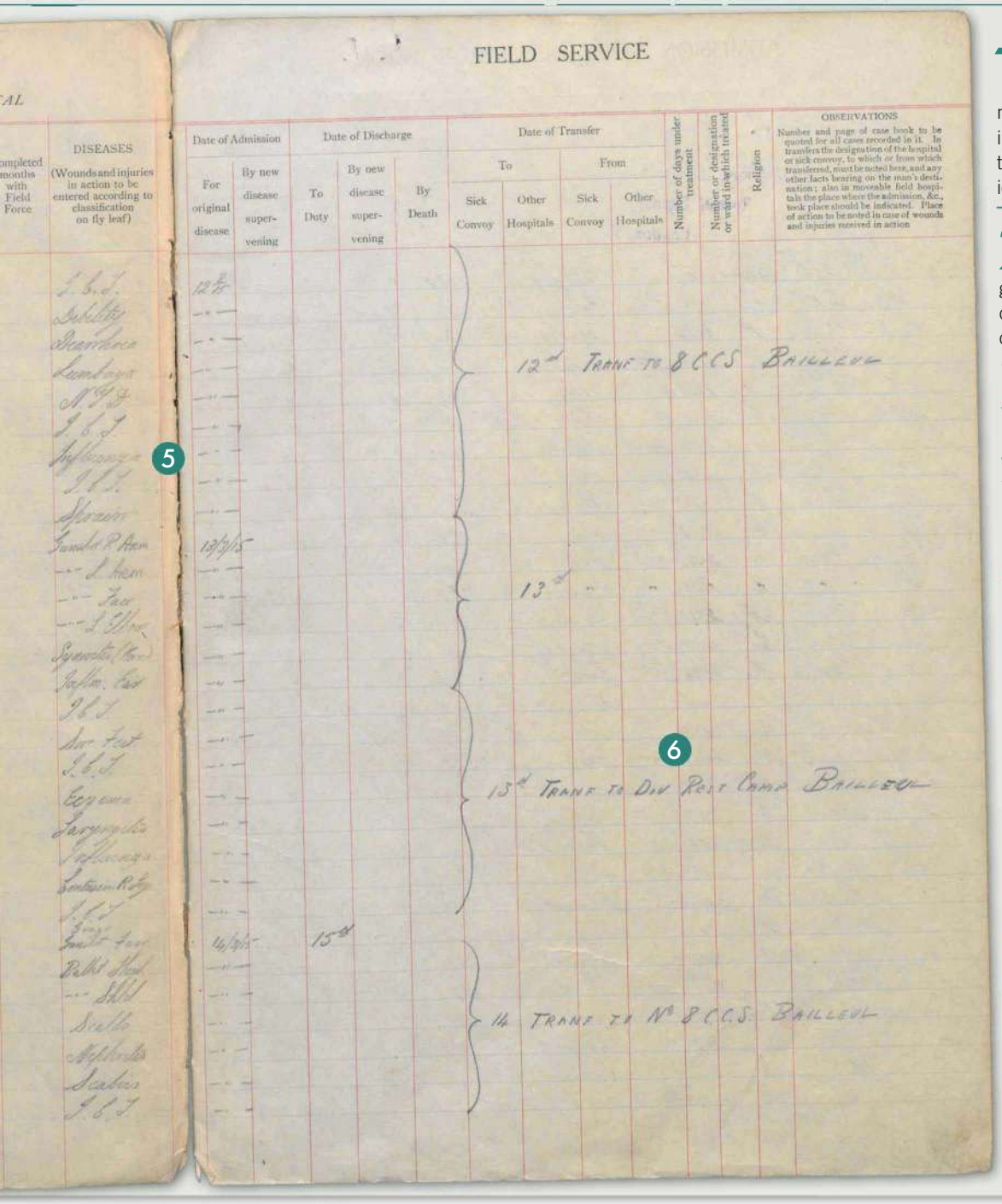
The information given depends on the type of casualty unit. There are likely to be more deaths recorded in hospitals and casualty clearing stations than in field ambulances, for example. Descriptions of injuries become more detailed the higher up the evacuation chain it is (see the 'Resources' box). The basic structure of each register should be similar but, particularly at times of heavy fighting,

Register, 1915



GETTY IMAGES

This relatively early (March 1915) admission and discharge register from 14th Field Ambulance is held by The National Archives in Kew, and available digitally on Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**)



1 Medical Unit

If the name of the medical unit is not on the image then it'll be on the transcript, so you can identify its War Diary.

2 Regiment

These two columns give the regiment/battalion/corps, battalion number and company (by letter) of each casualty, which will again help identify the War Diary.

3 Regimental Number

The regimental number and rank are useful for finding a Medal Index Card as well as the medal roll.

4 Surname

These three columns give surname and (usually) initial(s), age and length of service. There are some experienced soldiers here.

5 Diseases

Here you'll find details of the injury/disease (left-hand page) and date of admission to the unit (right-hand page).

6 Transfer

The place the casualty was transferred to is recorded. These men are all sick, so go to local casualty clearing stations or divisional rest camps so that they can recover.

recording may have been hurried, with individuals recorded by surname only or by surname and first initial. There are 4,026 records relating to the surname Robinson, for example, of whom 112 have no initial.

Great care should be taken in identifying a relative from these records, because they were written 'for the moment' and contain little genealogical information. Unless the name's very rare, or you already know the soldier number, it's best to look at other casualties of the same name to see if there's a closer fit. Other records relating to each casualty – for example a service record, a MIC, a pension card (which will often have genealogical information) or even a mention in an article in a local newspaper – may help you discount some candidates, and hopefully confirm a relative.

To search the 1,335,419 records online, go to Findmypast's collection 'British Armed Forces, First World War Soldiers' Medical Records' at **search.findmypast.co.uk/search-world-records/british-armed-forces-first-world-war-soldiers-medical-records** and supply as many details ▶

A member of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry at a military hospital in Chambéry, France

of your ancestor as you can. But expect several options to emerge.

Discover The Diary

Having identified your person, unit and date of injury, the War Diary covering the period should be in TNA's series WO 95 (**discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C14303**). You can search this collection using unit name/number and date and download the diary for free, provided you register with TNA's website online and log into your account.

TOP TIP!

Never assume that a patient with the correct surname must be your relation. There are three M Postlethwaites and five R Postlethwaites in this collection, for example.

This will give the general circumstances of their injury.

In addition to the admission/discharge records, the individual medical case sheets are being indexed on Discovery by a volunteer project. Currently the project's about 50 per cent complete, and has released 43,411 new items. An additional 52,326 records will be put on the index shortly, and the number is expected to exceed 100,000 by the end of the project in around spring 2025. Although the index contains a lot of information, a visit to TNA will be necessary to see the actual document(s). Be aware that quite a few involve sexually transmitted infections, particularly in the Royal Flying Corps, later the Royal Air Force.

To see if your ancestor is among the indexed records, you can use Discovery's 'Advanced search' facility at **discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/advanced-search**. Type MH 106 in the 'Search for or within references' text field and again supply as many details as you know, such as surname, first name(s), regimental number, regiment and rank in the 'Find words' fields. The indexed records can be very informative, as will be seen from this typical result: "Name: Thomas Smith; Rank: Gunner; Unit/Battalion/Regiment: 245 Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery; Service number: 222125; Age: 34; Hospital(s): North Evington Hospital, Leicester; Desford Hall Convalescent [Hospital]; Royal Artillery and Tank Corps Command Depot, Catterick (Royal Artillery Collecting Station, Hipswell Camp); Condition/Injury/Disease: Mustard Gas Poisoning; Details and Outcome: Patient admitted suffering with mustard gas poisoning. Arrived at Catterick Command Depot 24 December 1917. Further details given. Discharged to Draft 8 February 1918. Civil Occupation: Maltster. Includes a medical case sheet only; Number of Pages: 1."

Resources

Don't miss these websites

FORCES WAR RECORDS

w **uk.forceswarrecords.com**

This site has the First World War pension cards, recording pensions paid to injured soldiers or the next of kin of those killed.

THE LONG, LONG TRAIL

w **tinyurl.com/long-trail-evac**

Chris Baker's excellent website about researching soldiers from the First World War includes a guide to the military casualty chain, from initial inspection through to hospitalisation.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

w **discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk**

Wounded officers' medical-board records can usually be found in TNA series WO 339 and/or WO 374, and can be searched by name. However, they have not been digitised.

PHIL TOMASELLI has researched First World War records for 35 years, written several books, and regularly contributes articles to *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine*

GETTY IMAGES

Q&A

Our team of experts offers tips and inspiration Edited By Claire Vaughan

Dave Annal is a genealogist, author and lecturer

Paul Blake is the author of *Tracing Your Insolvent Ancestors*

Katherine Cobb is a member of AGRA based in Somerset

Debbie Kennett is the author of *DNA and Social Networking*

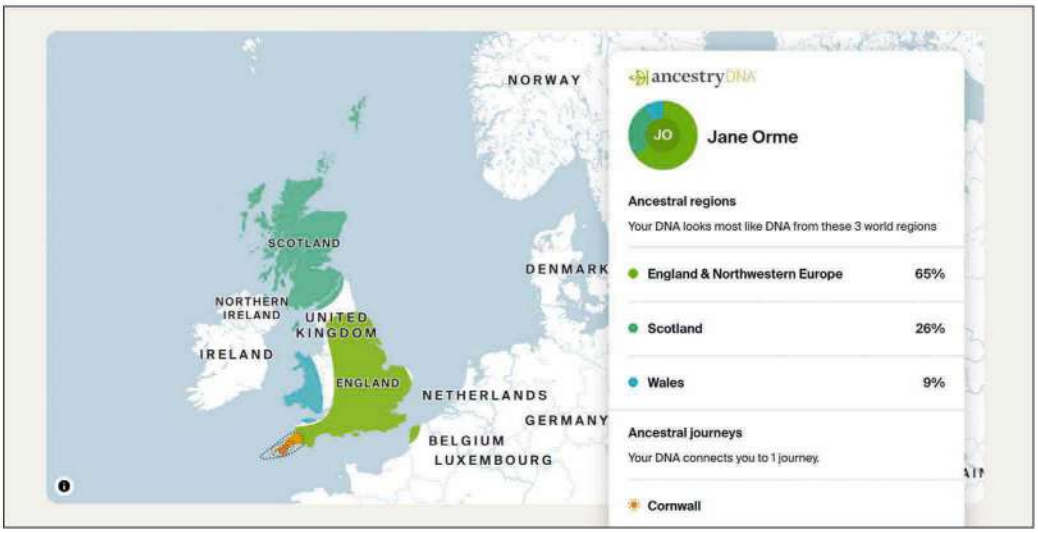
Jayne Shrimpton is a professional dress historian and portrait specialist

Alan Stewart is a family history writer, and author of *Grow Your Own Family Tree*

Phil Tomaselli is a military family history expert and author

Where does my Scottish DNA come from?

Q My mum and I recently took DNA tests from AncestryDNA (**ancestry.co.uk/dna**). As far back as we have managed to research in the family tree on both sides (until the 1600s on a lot of branches), nearly every ancestor was born in Cornwall. We were surprised then to see 26 per cent and 24 per cent Scottish results in mine and mum's DNA respectively, as we haven't found any ancestors with Scottish origins. Ancestry doesn't seem to distinguish between Cornish and English, so could that be a factor? Also, any ideas why our Scottish percentage is so high? Are there sites that might determine our genetic origins more accurately?
Jane Orme



Jane is confused about the high percentage of Scottish DNA in her AncestryDNA results

A The biogeographical ancestry reports from AncestryDNA have two components: the percentage breakdowns, which generally correspond with countries, and the ancestral journeys (formerly known as genetic communities), which provide granular information at the county level. The regions are calculated by comparing your DNA with reference populations using tiny segments of DNA representing shared ancestry from about 1,000 years ago.

Click on the arrow next to the percentage and you will get a page showing the range for your Scottish percentage. The map shows that the region labelled as Scotland actually extends into Northern Ireland and the north of England. It is hard to distinguish between neighbouring regions, and the smaller percentages will not necessarily correspond with your known ancestry. AncestryDNA updates its ancestral regions on an annual basis, usually around September, so by the time you read this you might well have a revised result. AncestryDNA has a community for Cornwall and a number of sub-regions within Cornwall. You and your mum would be expected to be assigned to some Cornish communities.

Each company uses different reference populations, and has its own algorithms for comparisons. Living DNA (**livingdna.com/uk**) is the only other firm that includes Cornwall as a distinct sub-region. 23andMe (**23andme.com/en-gb**) has a region for south-western England. You can also upload to MyHeritage DNA (**myheritage.com/dna**) and FamilyTreeDNA (**familytreedna.com**) for alternative reports. AncestryDNA and 23andMe have the most scientific and reliable results.

The most effective way of learning about your origins is by researching your family history and working with DNA matches to verify your genealogical research. Ideally you want to identify matches with DNA cousins on all of your different ancestral lines.
Debbie Kennett

HAVE YOU HIT A BRICK WALL? Please email your questions or family photographs to the following address: **wdytyaquestions@ourmedia.co.uk**

If selected, your query will be answered on these pages. Please note that we receive a large volume of correspondence each month, and cannot reply to each message individually. You are more likely to receive a response if you keep the question and background information concise (no more than 150 words), with a clear goal of enquiry.

How can I find George Palmer's bankruptcy records?

Q My 3x great grandfather, George Palmer, of Fellowship Farm, Reed, Hertfordshire, went bankrupt according to a notice in the *Herts & Cambs Reporter* of 20 February 1880.

Is there anywhere I can find records relating to this? I've tried The National Archives, Cambridgeshire Archives, and Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire county civil courts, all to no avail.
Christina Palmer

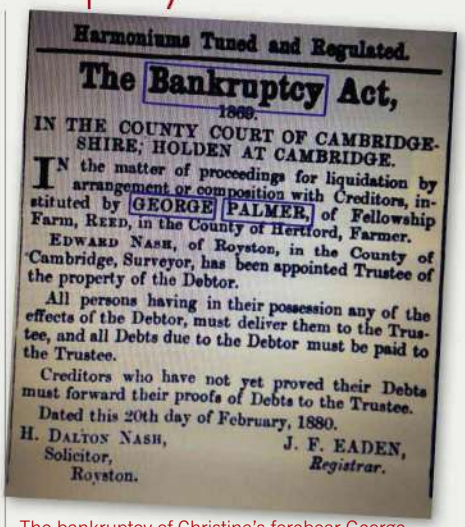
A George Palmer would have been just one of about 15,000 people declared bankrupt each year in England and Wales. Even by the 19th century, the rules surrounding bankruptcy remained complex. Importantly, it was limited to those persons that the law considered to be traders. From 1861, all insolvent debtors who risked imprisonment were able to apply for bankruptcy as the more attractive option. As a result many debtors gave false and misleading descriptions of their occupation in order to be defined as a trader.

In 1842, district bankruptcy courts were set up for areas outside London, and provincial cases were then held locally. From 1869, their jurisdiction passed to the relevant county court. A few cases may have been transferred to the Court of Bankruptcy in London following a special resolution.

Surviving records will now probably be held in the relevant local county record office among the records of the county court. When searching their online catalogues, use keyword terms such as 'bankrupt', 'bankruptcy' or 'bankrupt*'.

There are several series of registers for the period after 1869 held at The National Archives at Kew in Board of Trade (BT) records (**discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C38**). In your case, the most important would be the Registers of Bankruptcy in County Courts, 1870–1884 (BT40/34–52). If the case was transferred to the Court of Bankruptcy, then it could be listed in the Registers of Bankrupts in the London Courts, 1870–1886 (BT40/25–33).

However, often the best place to start research (or find out more) is with the *London Gazette* (**thegazette.co.uk**) or in local newspapers, many of which are now online at the British Newspaper Archive (**britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk**).
Paul Blake



Harmoniums Tuned and Regulated.

The Bankruptcy Act, 1869.

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE, HOLDEN AT CAMBRIDGE.

IN the matter of proceedings for liquidation by arrangement or composition with Creditors, instituted by GEORGE PALMER, of Fellowship Farm, Reed, in the County of Hertford, Farmer.

EDWARD NASH, of Royston, in the County of Cambridge, Surveyor, has been appointed Trustee of the property of the Debtor.

All persons having in their possession any of the effects of the Debtor, must deliver them to the Trustee, and all Debts due to the Debtor must be paid to the Trustee.

Creditors who have not yet proved their Debts must forward their proofs of Debts to the Trustee.

Dated this 20th day of February, 1880.

H. DALTON NASH, Solicitor, Royston.

J. F. EADEN, *Registrar.*

The bankruptcy of Christina's forebear George Palmer was reported in the local newspaper

1902. Marriage solemnized at All Saints Church in the Parish of Hindley in the County of Lancaster

Columns. No.	1 When Married.	2 Name and Surname.	3 Age.	4 Condition.	5 Rank or Profession.	6 Residence at the time of Marriage.	7 Father's Name and Surname.	8 Rank or Profession of Father.
265	Dec. 6 1902	Walter Ainsworth	21	bachelor	Coal Contractor	6 Church St.	James Ainsworth	Coal Contractor
		Emily Derbyshire	18	spinster	—	136 Park Rd	William Derbyshire	Porter

Married in the Church of All Saints according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Established Church by Superintendent Registrar's Certificate ~~or after~~ by me, C. J. Barrington

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Walter Ainsworth, Emily Derbyshire

in the Presence of us, Joseph Derbyshire, Mary Derbyshire

The record of Walter Ainsworth's marriage to Emily Derbyshire

Where was Walter Ainsworth before 1902?

Q Walter Ainsworth married Emily Derbyshire on 6 December 1902 in Hindley, Lancashire. He was a coal contractor, aged 21, living in Hindley. His father, James, was also a coal contactor. Walter died in 1935 aged 53. I can't find anything about him before 1902. The records suggest that he was born in 1881/2 in Beeston Hill, Leeds.
Heather Quiney

A The biggest clue is the very specific birthplace Walter gave in the 1921 census. Beeston Hill is west of Leeds, partly in the Holbeck district and partly in Hunslet. His birth would have been registered in one of these two districts, and not in Leeds. You should also search for a baptism; the Anglican parish of St Luke's, Beetson Hill (Holbeck), was formed in 1869 (the registers are on Ancestry; **ancestry.co.uk**), but there were also Methodist and Congregational chapels in the area. The Holbeck Union Workhouse was located in Beeston Hill, and there was a local board school founded in 1880. West Yorkshire Archive Service holds the records (**www.wyjs.org.uk/archive-service/**).

The most likely solution to the problem is that Walter had a different name at birth. Perhaps his father died when he was young and his mother remarried a Mr Ainsworth. We shouldn't assume Walter was telling the truth about his father's name. This may have been an attempt to cover up an illegitimate birth, and it could be an amalgam of his real father's (or grandfather's) first name and his stepfather's surname.

It's likely that your ancestor was born in Beeston Hill, and was given the name Walter at birth. Although 92 children called Walter were registered in Holbeck or Hunslet between the December quarter of 1880 and the June quarter of 1882 (including a Walter Thompson Hainsworth, who is not our man), you should be able to eliminate them one by one and end up with a small pool of candidates.

If only Walter had still been alive in 1939, we could have found his date of birth from the National Register.
Dave Annal

Picture Analysis

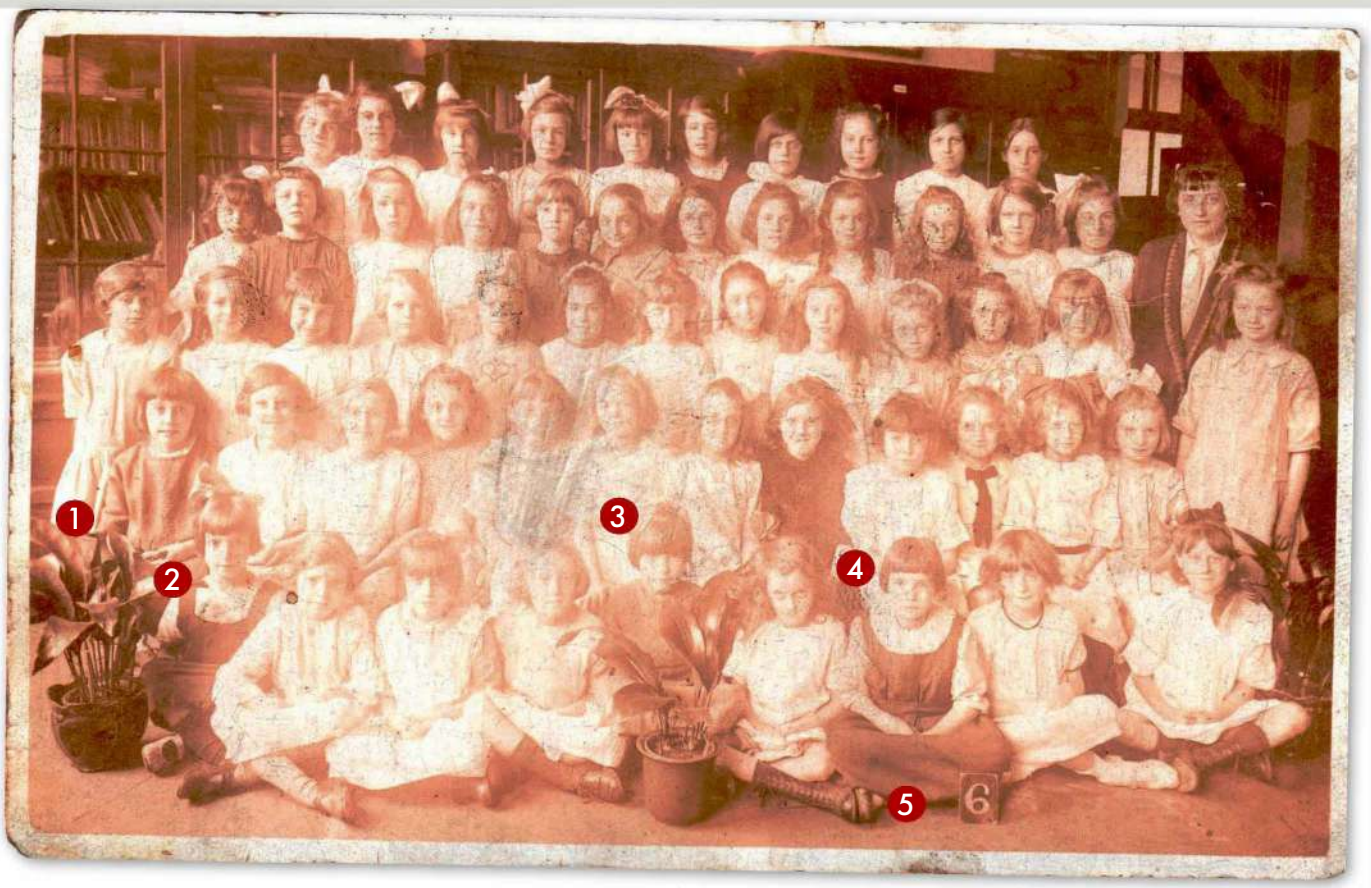
When was this school photo taken?

Q Could you help me date this school photograph, believed to be taken at Westbourne Road School, Islington? This would then help me to establish who is in the picture.
Annabelle Long

A 'Official' school photographs began to be taken annually at many local schools from the 1880s onwards, following the Education Acts that required more children to attend regularly and aided by technological developments facilitating photography out on location, away from the studio. Victorian pupils were usually lined up outdoors in the playground, but from the early 1900s group scenes inside the classroom, as here, became common. Often a slate or board in the front row identified the school and/or the year or class. Although no name is given here, the "6" may denote the class or year group.

Identifying relatives among the small faces in school photographs relies on establishing an accurate timeframe from the appearance of the children and any adults present. Here a female teacher stands far right, her bobbed haircut and streamlined, masculine-style clothes typical of the 1920s, while the girls' clothes and hairstyles narrow the likely date further to c1920–1925. Aged about seven to 10, these children were all born c1910–1919, which might clarify which of your relations are pictured here (there may be siblings), and perhaps also confirm the school.

Copies of such photographs were usually preserved in school archives or, following closure, in local-authority archives. These might be dated, and even bear pupils' names.
Jayne Shrimpton



1 PROPS
Potted aspidistra plants remained fashionable at least into the early 1920s, and were often used as props in professional photos of all kinds.

2 GYMSLIPS
In the 1920s, school uniforms were still evolving and weren't usually required for primary school-aged children. However, gymslips were becoming fashionable, as can be seen on two girls here.

3 DRESSES
Most girls wear their 'Sunday best' frocks, their simple styling in plain colours, loose-fitting and featuring round necklines and elbow-length sleeves typical of the early to mid-1920s period.

4 HAIRSTYLES
By the early 1920s many girls wore modern bobbed hair with a short straight fringe, while some retained long hair. Large white hair bows, a 1910s fashion, continued for some years as well.

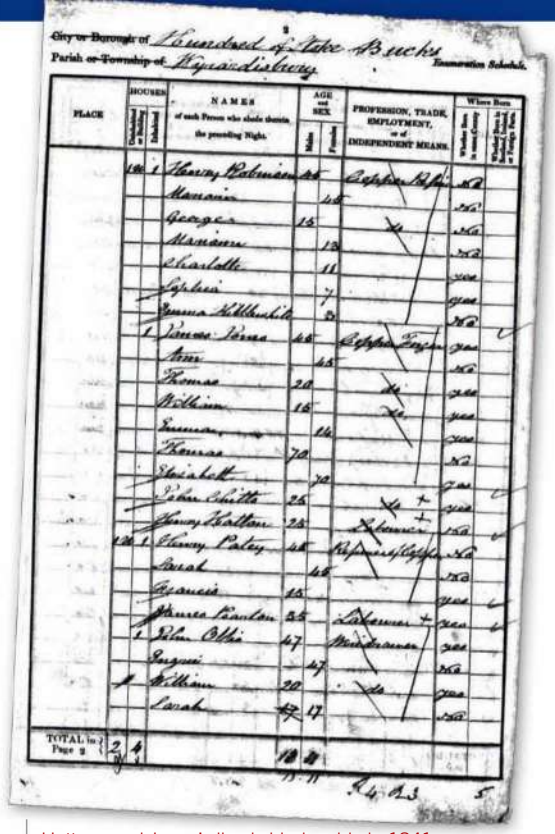
5 FOOTWEAR
Footwear was in transition, some girls adopting modern short socks and bar shoes, others still wearing laced leather Edwardian-style boots.

How do I find out more about Elizabeth Hatton?

Q I'm researching my 4x great grandmother, Elizabeth Hatton. I've found two possible baptisms for her – in Great Marlow (1795) and Reading (1799). She had an illegitimate son in 1815; the reputed father was William Liley, who I also can't find much about. Elizabeth lived in Great Marlow, Buckinghamshire, and married James Jones on 19 May 1819 in Bisham, Berkshire. There were 11 children born in Great Marlow, 1818–1830, to two sets of James and Elizabeth Jones. How do I work out which are 'mine'?
Linda Kent

A Finding information on Elizabeth Hatton/Jones may be challenging, because coverage of parish registers for Berkshire and Buckinghamshire on the main subscription websites is relatively poor. The Berkshire indexes on Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**) are based largely on Bishops' Transcripts, which often have gaps and do not include every parish. I suggest you check which parishes in the area are not online, and visit the relevant archive to search the registers.

Looking at the baptisms of the children of James and Elizabeth Jones at Great Marlow, it seems that at least some do not belong to 'your' James and Elizabeth. The eldest, John, was baptised on 19 July 1818, nearly a year before the marriage of James and Elizabeth at Bisham. Since the Buckinghamshire Marriage Index shows that on the day of John's baptism, James Jones and Elizabeth Harding were married at Great Marlow, there seems little doubt that this couple were the parents of John and probably some of the other children. Both couples may have lived in Great Marlow in the 1820s. There are two instances of two baptisms in the same year (1822 and 1825), with parents recorded as James and Elizabeth Jones.



Hattons and Jones's lived side-by-side in 1841

Did the father of either Elizabeth Hatton (baptised 1795 and 1799) leave a will? If so, this may help to prove a connection.

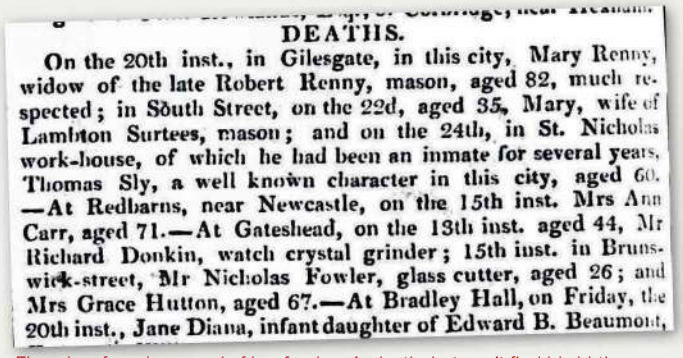
Finally, when searching, look out for spelling variations of Hatton and Liley. I found a William Lailey, aged 62, at Burghfield (which adjoins Tilehurst) in the 1841 census.
Katherine Cobb

TOP TIP If there is more than one candidate in baptism records, especially when researching someone with a common name, gather all the evidence you can, including burial records, and create mini family trees for each possibility.

Where did Richard Donkin come from?

Q I'm seeking the origins of my great great grandfather, Richard Donkin, who married Mary Walker in Tynemouth, Northumberland, on 4 April 1802. The couple were living in Gateshead, County Durham, for the births of their children Grace (1803), David (1804), Anne (1807), John (1816) and finally Richard (1817).

The entries for the first three children give their father's occupation as "glass grinder", and a death notice in the *Durham Chronicle* in April 1827 gives Richard's occupation as "watch crystal grinder".
Fiona Milnes



DEATHS.

On the 20th inst., in Gilesgate, in this city, Mary Renny, widow of the late Robert Renny, mason, aged 82, much respected; in South Street, on the 22d, aged 35, Mary, wife of Lambton Surtees, mason; and on the 24th, in St. Nicholas work-house, of which he had been an inmate for several years, Thomas Sly, a well known character in this city, aged 60.—At Redbarns, near Newcastle, on the 15th inst. Mrs Ann Carr, aged 71.—At Gateshead, on the 13th inst. aged 44, Mr Richard Donkin, watch crystal grinder; 15th inst. in Brunswick-street, Mr Nicholas Fowler, glass cutter, aged 26; and Mrs Grace Hutton, aged 67.—At Bradley Hall, on Friday, the 20th inst., Jane Diana, infant daughter of Edward B. Beaumont,

Fiona has found a record of her forebear's death, but can't find his birth

A You are fortunate that the baptism and burial registers for the Diocese of Durham (County Durham and Northumberland) contain more information than the usual registers. Shute Barrington, Bishop of Durham, ordered his parish priests to record additional data from 1798 until the new standardised register formats were introduced in 1813.

It is important to note too that as well as Donkin the family appears in some records as "Doncan" or "Duncan".

In Findmypast's Napoleonic War Records collection (**bit.ly/fmp-nap-war-recs**), there is a record of a Richard Duncan who was taken prisoner in 1808 and held at Arras in France. There is also a record of a Richard Donkin who was released from imprisonment in 1814. I wonder if these refer to your great great grandfather, which would explain the large gap between the baptisms of Anne and John.

The burial record for Richard Donkin in Gateshead in 1827 gives his age as 44, so he was born in 1782/1783. I could find no sign of a baptism record for Richard at Durham Records Online (**https://durhamrecordsonline.com**), FreeREG (**freereg.org.uk**) or the main subscription sites. The surname Duncan has strong links with Scotland. Scotland's People (**scotlandspeople.gov.uk**) holds the baptism on 1 February 1783 of Ritchard (sic) Duncan, son of David Duncan in Backmuir in Forfarshire (or Angus). Could this be your ancestor?
Alan Stewart

What did my RFC grandfather do during his 'missing' years?

Thomas' Second World War papers may include details of his early career

Q My grandfather, Thomas Griffiths (born 1884), joined the Royal Flying Corps in 1915 even though he was over age. I sent for his service papers (no. 7939), and noticed a three-year gap between his enrolment date and discharge at the end of the war. He is recorded as an aircraft mechanic (AM), but seems to have ended up as a driver. His Medal Index Card indicates that he was in France during the missing years, but nothing is recorded. How can I find out what he was doing during these silent years?

He re-enlisted for the Second World War and served, I assume, as ground crew. He died in Darlington in 1957.

Rita Hull

RITA HULL would love to know more about her grandfather's service in the First World War

A The reason for the absence of detailed Royal Flying Corps postings on Royal Air Force service records is that the original RFC records were transferred to the RAF, which only copied basic information onto the new record, often missing out pre-RAF postings. Thomas is perhaps unusual in having not only his First World War RAF service record available but also his RFC Short Service Attestation Form; both are on Forces War Records (**https://uk.forceswarrecords.com**) and Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**). Unfortunately, it too provides no details of his RFC work pre-1 April 1918.

Thomas's Medal Index Card for his 1914–15 Star, available on Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**), shows that he landed in France on 15 October 1915. He'd only enlisted on 26 August, so he'd had less than two months' training – just enough to cover the basics. This suggests that, as a professional butler/valet, he became an officer's servant or, if he was also a chauffeur, a driver. In other words, he'd go nowhere near aircraft! He may have enlisted to accompany his employer to the Front. If you know who employed him, check to see if he was a First World War RAF officer by searching The National Archives' (TNA's) service records for free via the guide at **tinyurl.com/tna-guide-ww1-raf-officers**. This might give clues to where he was and, by extension, his valet (called a batman in the RFC). "AM" is also an abbreviation for aircraftsman, so he might not have been an air mechanic.

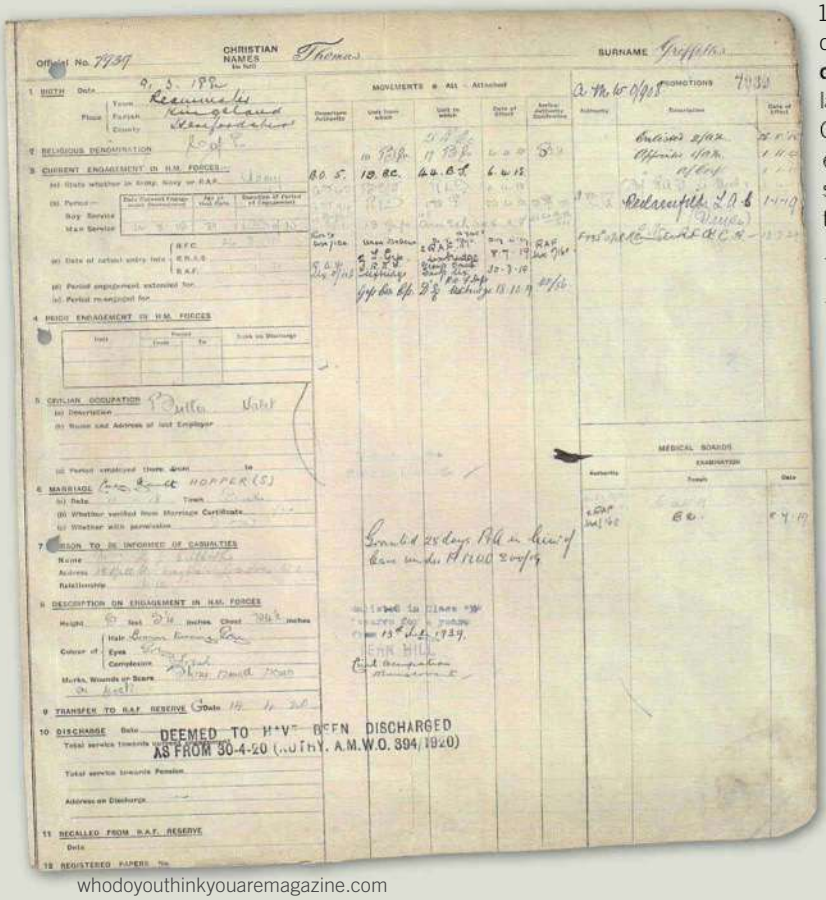
Thomas' date of entering France, 15 October, matches perfectly with the arrival there of 13 Squadron RFC, recently formed for reconnaissance. There are several boxes of their records at TNA, so you should search its online catalogue Discovery (**discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk**) using 13 Squadron and AIR 1 as references.

I've examined some, but not found Thomas – there are no simple lists I can find, just thick documents detailing individuals' movements. I don't know that he'll be there, but further (time-consuming) searching might reveal him.

Without a start unit (if he's not in 13 Squadron), you have to work back from the first unit noted on the RAF service record. Top of the list is 28 Balloon Section and the only record I can find is AIR 1/1518/204/61/1, a record book dated October 1918, which may contain earlier material. Next is 10 Balloon Company for which TNA's catalogue has no obvious reference, but I know it was part of No. 1 Balloon Wing, which handled much of their admin. TNA file AIR 1/1765/204/142/8 contains 1 Wing's weekly returns from April 1916 onwards, and may mention when Thomas joined and from which RFC unit. Then it's just a question of working back again…

Finally, Thomas' Second World War papers may include details of his early career. You can apply for these online via **www.gov.uk/get-copy-military-records-of-service/apply-for-the-records-of-a-deceased-serviceperson**, and my most recent application was processed most efficiently.

Phil Tomaselli



Thomas Griffith's service record is missing details

Is this my great grandfather Edward?

Q This may be my great grandfather, Edward Winter Robins (1857–1911). He was a river constable in 1908, and served in the First World War. Could you date this photograph for me?
Reg Brown

A This is a Merchant Navy crewman on an Australian vessel c1919/1920.

I'm sure your year of death is just a typo, since if Edward Winter Robins was born in 1857 and died in 1911, he can't have served in the First World War! I think, looking at the online records, that this is Edward Winter Robins, born 1882, who did serve in the war and later emigrated to Australia. In the 1911 census, he's described as a boilermaker, living in Swanscombe, near Gravesend, and married to Florence.

Edward was awarded the Mercantile Marine Medal on 28 August 1919, and the Medal Index Card can be downloaded for free via The National Archives' online catalogue Discovery: **discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/D8085552**.

There's also a nice photograph (without moustache) which confirms the match on his Merchant Navy Identity Card on Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**), showing that he served on HMAT (His Majesty's Australian Transport) *Malwa* as a boilermaker and Royal Naval Reserve rating. He was still at sea in 1925 on the SS *Orama* (a liner built for the Australia run) as a boilermaker (card on Findmypast).

I can't find when he settled in Australia, but in the New South Wales electoral roll in 1930, there's an Edward Winters Robins, boilermaker, living at Prescot, Park Road, Lidcombe, with wife Florence Elizabeth and (presumably) daughter Florence Lily Gladys. He died on 4 December 1941 in Auburn.
Phil Tomaselli

1 CAP BADGE

The cap badge is clearly the Rising Sun emblem of the Australian Expeditionary Force of the First World War. Since he was employed on a 'trooper', it makes sense that Edward should wear their badge and dates the photo to the First World War period.

2 FACIAL HAIR

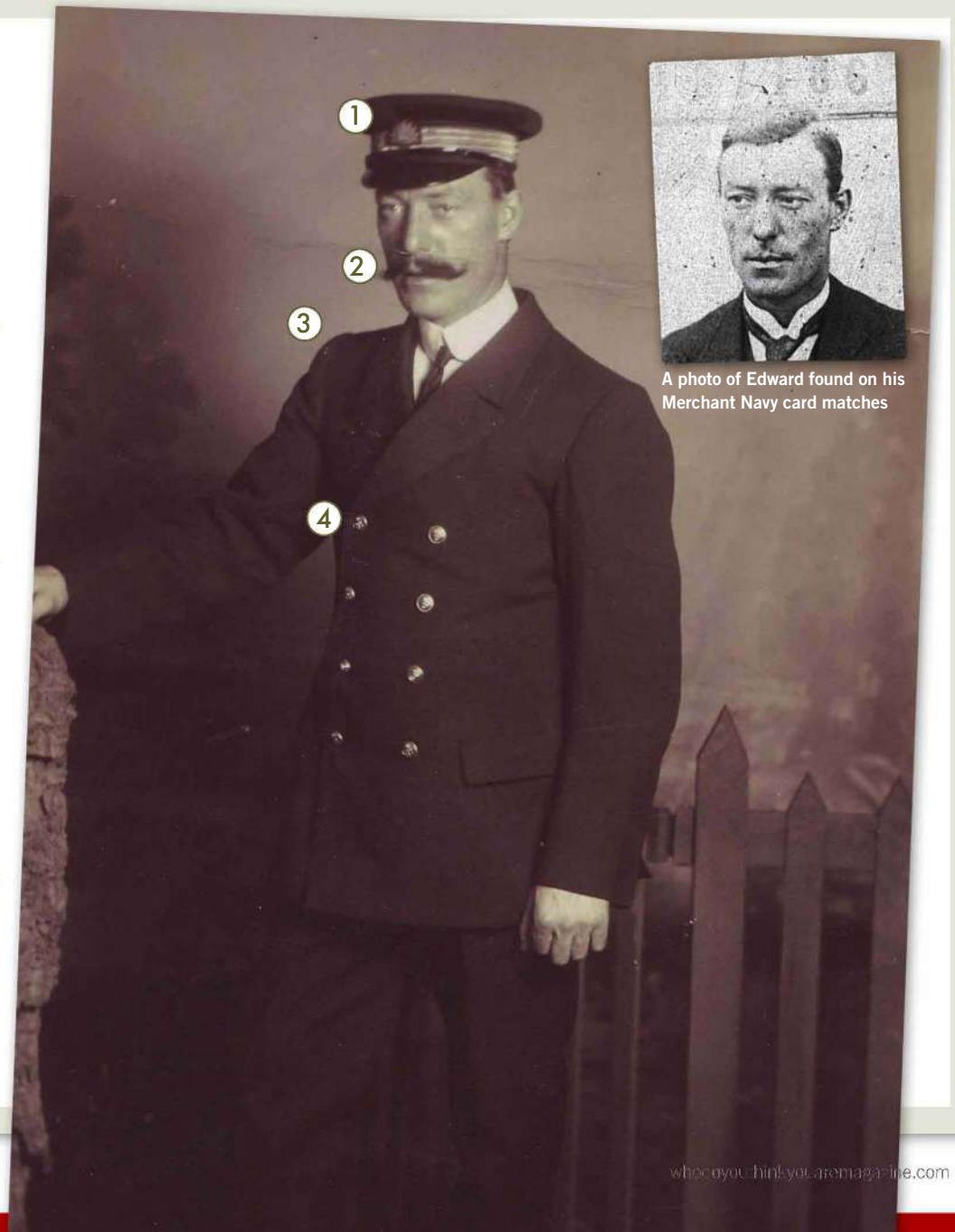
The moustache is a dead giveaway. Royal Navy personnel were not allowed facial hair, unless it was a 'full set' – ie a full beard. This natty moustache means that he's a merchant seaman.

3 UNIFORM

It may closely resemble a Royal Navy uniform of the First World War period (dark double-breasted jacket, white shirt and tie), but this is a Merchant Marine one. In September 1918 the Board of Trade introduced a standard uniform, although the cloth was black rather than dark navy blue.

4 BUTTONS

The brass buttons of the Merchant Navy show, as here, an anchor passing through a crown rather than with crown above, which was the design used on Royal Navy buttons.



A photo of Edward found on his Merchant Navy card matches

Exempt From War

Rosemary Collins finds out about a team cataloguing a unique set of First World War records from Suffolk

Some of the volunteers working on the project

Conscription in the First World War was introduced at the beginning of 1916. All single British men aged 18–41 were eligible for military service, but they could be granted an exemption if they could prove that they were already doing essential war work or that military service would cause them severe hardship, as well as on the grounds of ill health or conscientious objection. Across the country, local military tribunals were set up to hear applications for exemption.

Sadly, most tribunal records were destroyed in 1921. But Suffolk Archives (**www.suffolkarchives.co.uk**), located at The Hold in Ipswich, holds a rare collection of 1,200 application records from the Bury St Edmunds tribunal – although they've been hard to access.

Each tribunal was attended by a Military Representative chosen by the War Office

"There was a great big stack of them covered by two reference numbers, so not very useful for researchers," explains Hannah Salisbury, community and learning officer for West Suffolk at Suffolk Archives.

Last year, Suffolk Archives began recruiting volunteers to catalogue the collection. A team of 14 volunteers went through the records, giving each one an individual case number and inputting details from it into an online form. The records can now be searched via the service's online catalogue.

Hannah says that they've also researched more information about the stories of the men in the records using family history sites and newspapers.

"We've tried to look at it from both sides," she says. "The men who were applying and their employers, and also the people who'd been given what must have been a pretty awful job of making the decisions about who was going to get sent off to war – and who was going to stay at home."

The members of the tribunal included local councillors, aldermen and businessmen. Each tribunal was attended by a Military Representative – a local civilian of independent means who was chosen by the War Office.

Hannah says that the records usually show a "disparity" between the views of the Military Representative and the tribunal: "The final decision is often some sort of compromise between what's been asked for and what the Military Representative wants. The Military Representative often doesn't seem to be terribly concerned about the kind of challenges that an individual might have been facing. That's their job; they're there to put the Army's point of view. And the civilian panellists who actually make the decision tend to be more sympathetic."

One of the most interesting stories the researchers uncovered is that of Albert Crighton.

"He was a travelling showman," Hannah says. "I've worked in archives for a really long time, and I've never come across a travelling showman before. He was applying for exemption because of his domestic situation: he thought that it wasn't a good idea for him to go away and join the Army because his wife had just come out of an asylum after 12 months of in-patient treatment, and they had three young children. I really expected the panel to not care, but actually they were sympathetic and gave him temporary exemption for six months."

Albert managed to get through to the end of the war on a series of temporary exemptions, but tragically died in the flu pandemic in 1921.

Get Involved

Suffolk Archives

w **www.suffolkarchives.co.uk**

You can search the collection via the 'Search Our Website and Archive Catalogue' text field on the homepage of Suffolk Archives' website. Just enter the first part of the catalogue reference number followed by an asterisk, EE500/D/12/22*, then a space and relevant keyword(s), such as the name of a person, a street or a company – so EE500/D/12/22* smith will return matches for the surname Smith. You can also view a fascinating online exhibition at **suffolkarchives.shorthandstories.com/wwi-tribunals/index.html**.

TELL YOUR STORY

Share your local history project with us and you could appear in the magazine!

Please write to us at the address on page 6 or email *rosemary.collins@ourmedia.co.uk*

THE BIG PICTURE

Celebrating our ancestors caught on camera

GETTY IMAGES

Calm Before The Storm

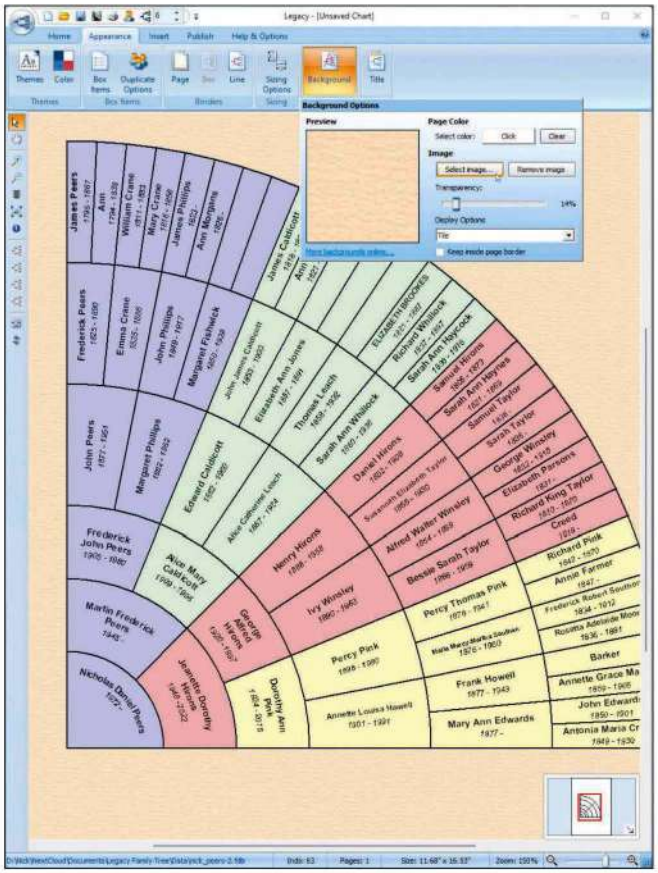
British soldiers lay a light railway line near Boesinghe in Ypres, Belgium, ahead of the Battle of Passchendaele, 28 July 1917

The name of the village after which the campaign is named might be pretty but the Battle of Passchendaele was anything but, and took place during the long war of attrition on the Western Front notorious over a century later for its ugliness and brutality. Indeed, "the name Passchendaele has become synonymous with mud, blood and futility", according to the Imperial War Musems (**iwm.org.uk/history/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-third-battle-of-ypres-passchendaele**).

But at the time the Third Battle of Ypres, as it's also known, was hailed by many as a very welcome Allied success. Take for example the verdict of the *Yarmouth Independent* on 24 November: "The Passchendaele victory must not be classified in terms of yards or miles. Its greatness lies in the demonstration it affords that Sir Douglas Haig's methods of attack, with time and patience, are more than equal to the best German defence, and that they have, in fact, distinctly gained the upper hand of the enemy on his most important front."

Haig, the commander-in-chief of the British Expeditionary Force, was determined to break through the German defences at Ypres, and launched an artillery bombardment in the middle of July that lasted two weeks and involved 3,000 guns firing more than four million shells against the heavily fortified German positions.

The battle proper began in the early hours of 31 July, when the Allied infantry advanced into no man's land along a 15-mile front. But the shelling had ruined the terrain and destroyed drainage ditches, and the rain that began that afternoon and lasted three weeks forced the soldiers to wade through thick mud, and immobilised tanks. Strong resistance and awful weather meant that the offensive lasted 100 days. Haig's victory – an advance of five miles, with the final objective Passchendaele captured in early November – cost about 325,000 Allied casualties, while the number of German casualties was 260,000.



Create striking wall charts with Legacy

Nick Peers explains how you can get the most out of Legacy's powerful free Charting tool

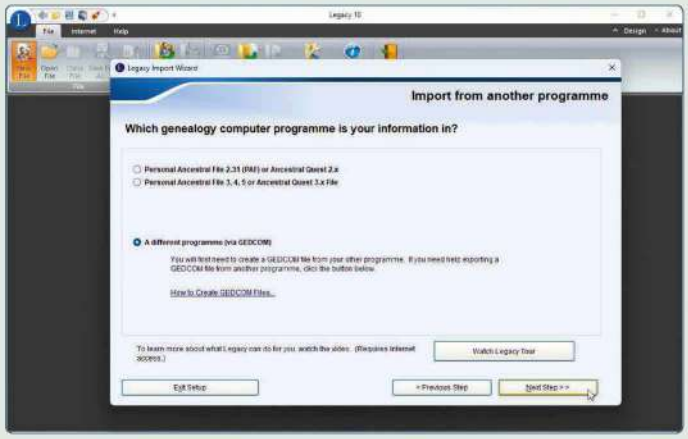
When MyHeritage (**myheritage.com**) released Legacy Family Tree 10 earlier this year, it removed its Deluxe Edition and made all previously paid-for features completely free. That includes its powerful Legacy Charting tool, which allows you to create a range of striking wall charts from your family tree with the minimum of effort. Not only can you produce colourful charts to print across multiple sheets of A4 (or A3) paper, but you can also export them as image files.

Legacy Charting works best with trees created in Legacy itself, so you'll need to transfer yours across from your current program to use it. That's easy enough – start by exporting your current tree as a GEDCOM file using the program's export tools. If the option is there, be sure to include your media files (or links).

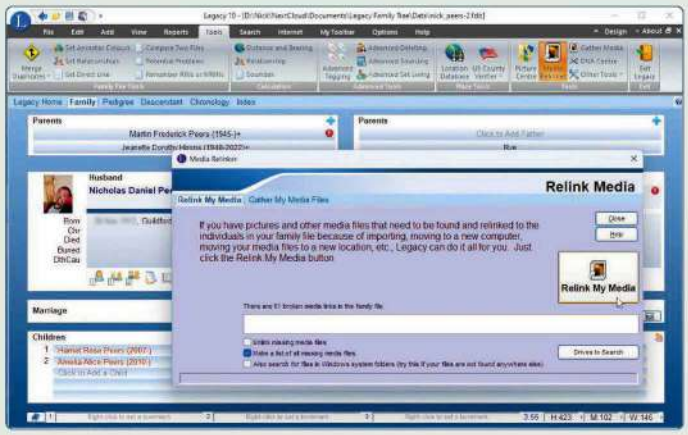
If you've not yet installed Legacy, go to **legacyfamilytree.com** and click the orange download button. You'll need to sign up for the newsletter (you can unsubscribe immediately) to receive an email with a link to the program. Click the link to download and install it, then follow our step-by-step guide.

TOP TIP!

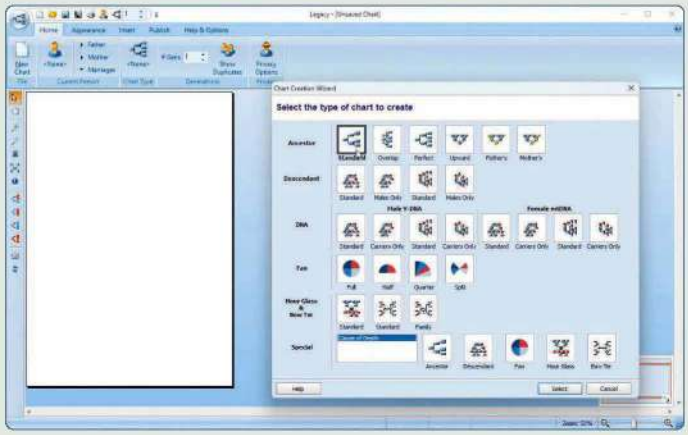
Annoyingly Legacy Charting has no convenient undo function. If everything goes wrong, click the 'Reformat Chart' button on the left to revert to the default layout.



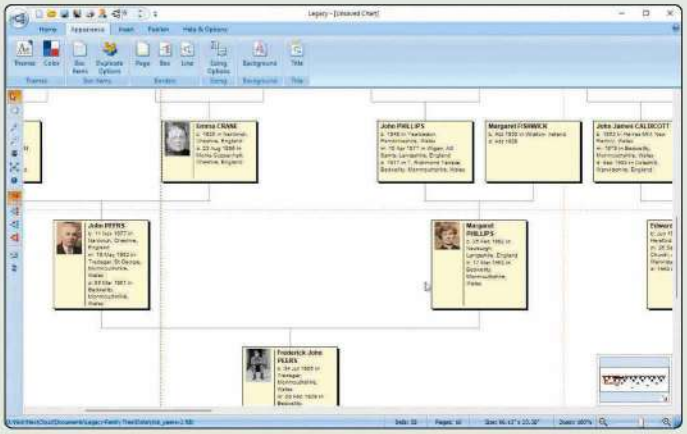
1 Set Up Your Tree In Legacy Once installed, open Legacy and click 'New File' if necessary to open the startup wizard. Choose 'Import From Another Programme', then leave the GEDCOM option checked before clicking 'Next Step'. Follow the prompts to select your GEDCOM file before choosing a name for your Legacy tree.



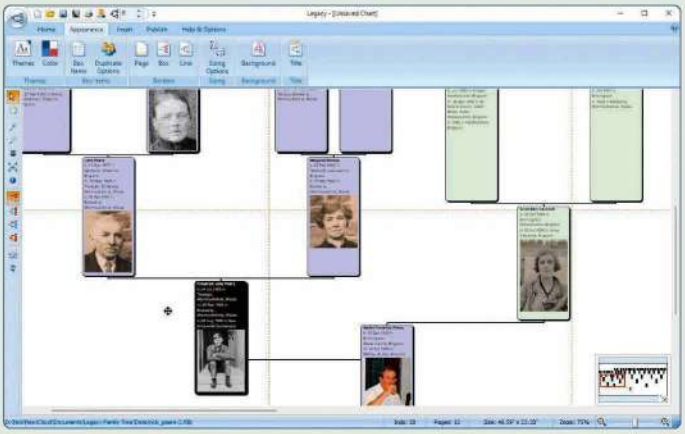
2 Relink Missing Photos Once your tree has been imported, browse through it: if you come across any missing photos, switch to the 'Tools' tab and click 'Media Relinker'. Click the 'Drives to Search' button to choose which drive or drives to search, then click 'Relink My Media' to send Legacy hunting for your photographs.



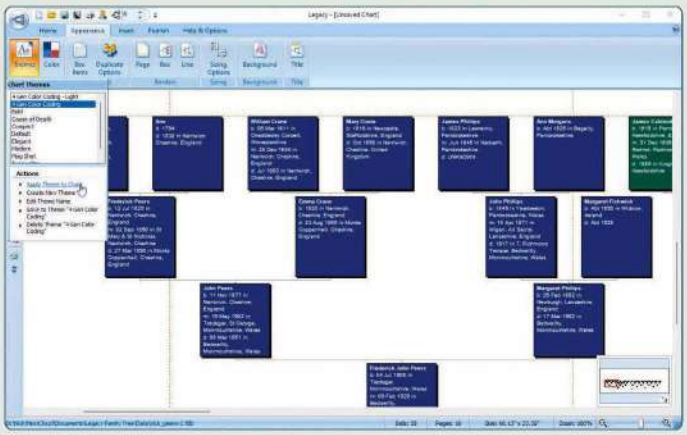
3 Open Legacy Charting Once your imported tree is in good shape, navigate to the person you'd like to make the focus of your chart. Switch to the 'Reports' tab and click 'Legacy Charting' to open the app, which automatically selects your chosen individual and presents you with the Chart Creation Wizard (pictured).



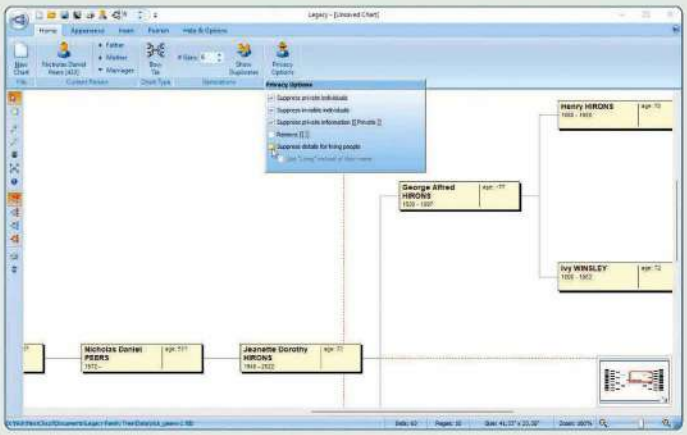
4 Select And View Choose a chart type and click 'Select'. Legacy Charting will immediately generate the chart and display the part of it containing the selected person on-screen. Use the scrollbars to move around, or click-and-drag within the thumbnail in the bottom right to jump quickly to another part of the chart.



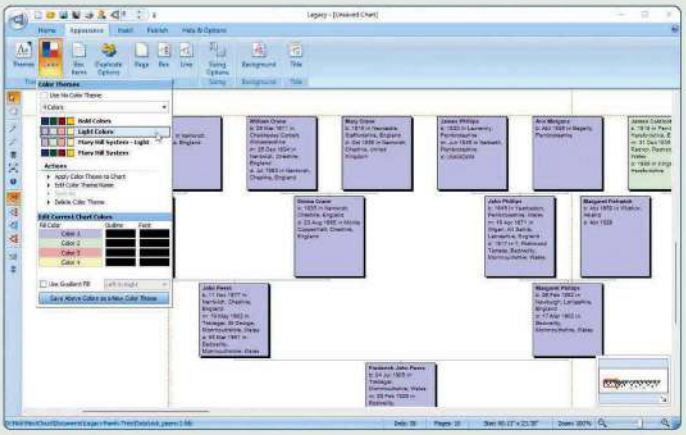
7 Try The Other Options Take the time to explore the other options on offer – you can reformat boxes, pages and ancestral lines, play around with box sizes, add backgrounds and titles, plus even click-and-drag individual boxes or generational lines on the chart itself (click the box to highlight it, then click-and-drag).



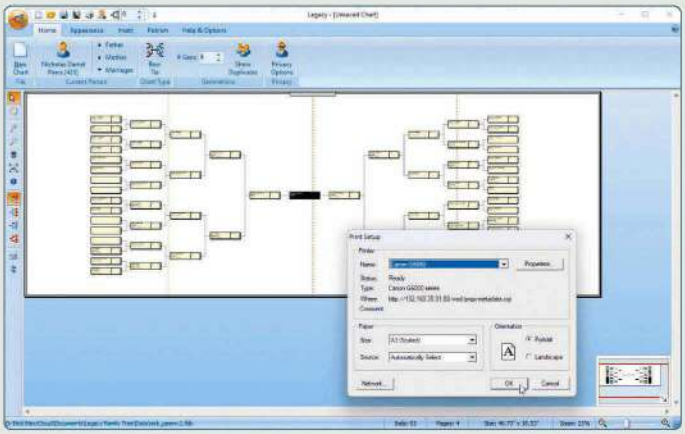
5 Try A New Look Use the 'Appearance' tab on the ribbon to change the colour, look and content of the chart's boxes. Click 'Themes', select one and then choose 'Apply Theme to Chart' to make a radical change in its look (if you don't like your changes, select 'Default' from the list and click 'Apply Theme…' to go back).



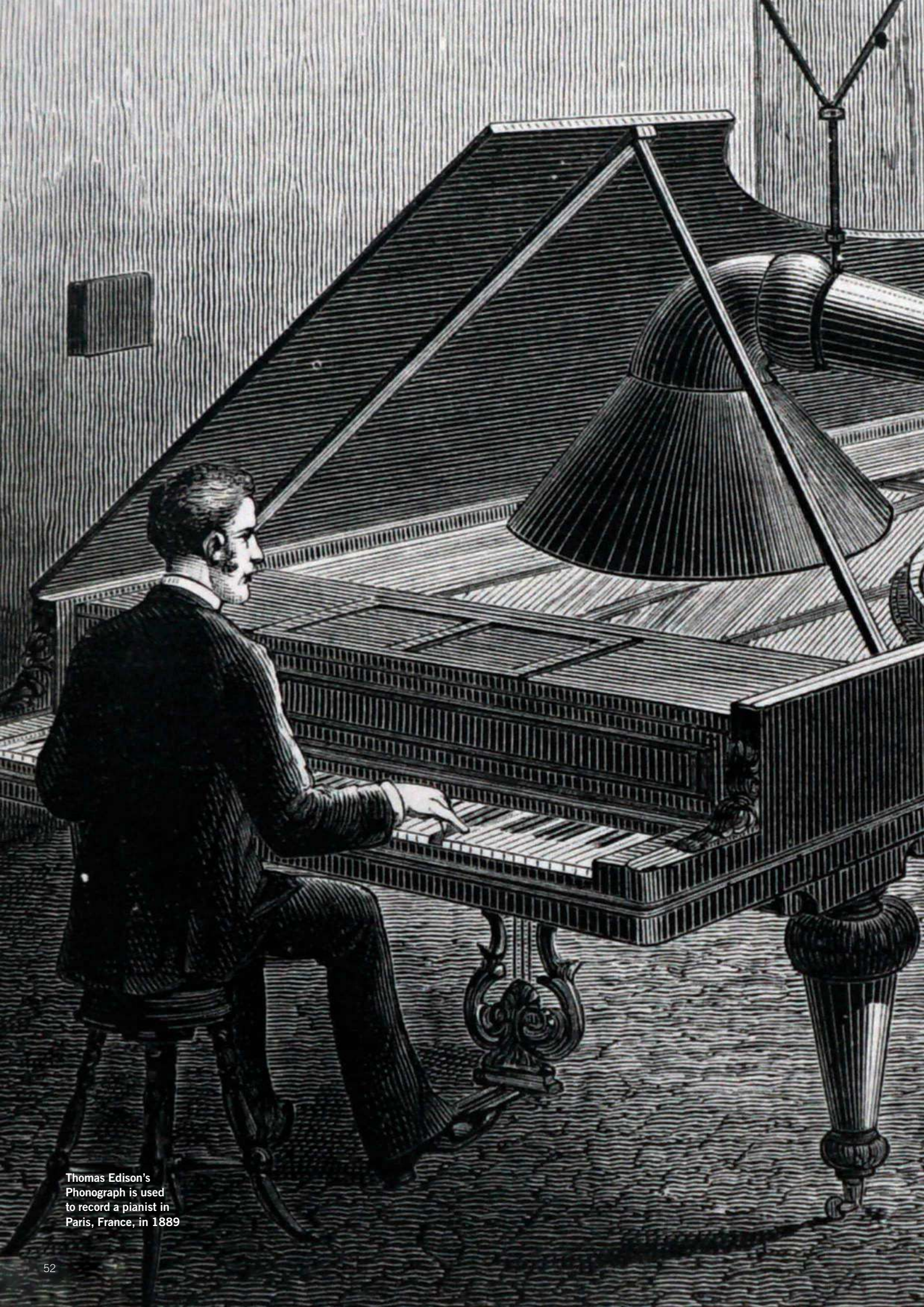
8 Try Something Different Switch back to the 'Home' tab where you can easily change the chart to feature another person in your tree, alter the chart type (clicking this button reopens the Chart Creation Wizard), adjust the number of generations you want to show, and change your tree's privacy options.



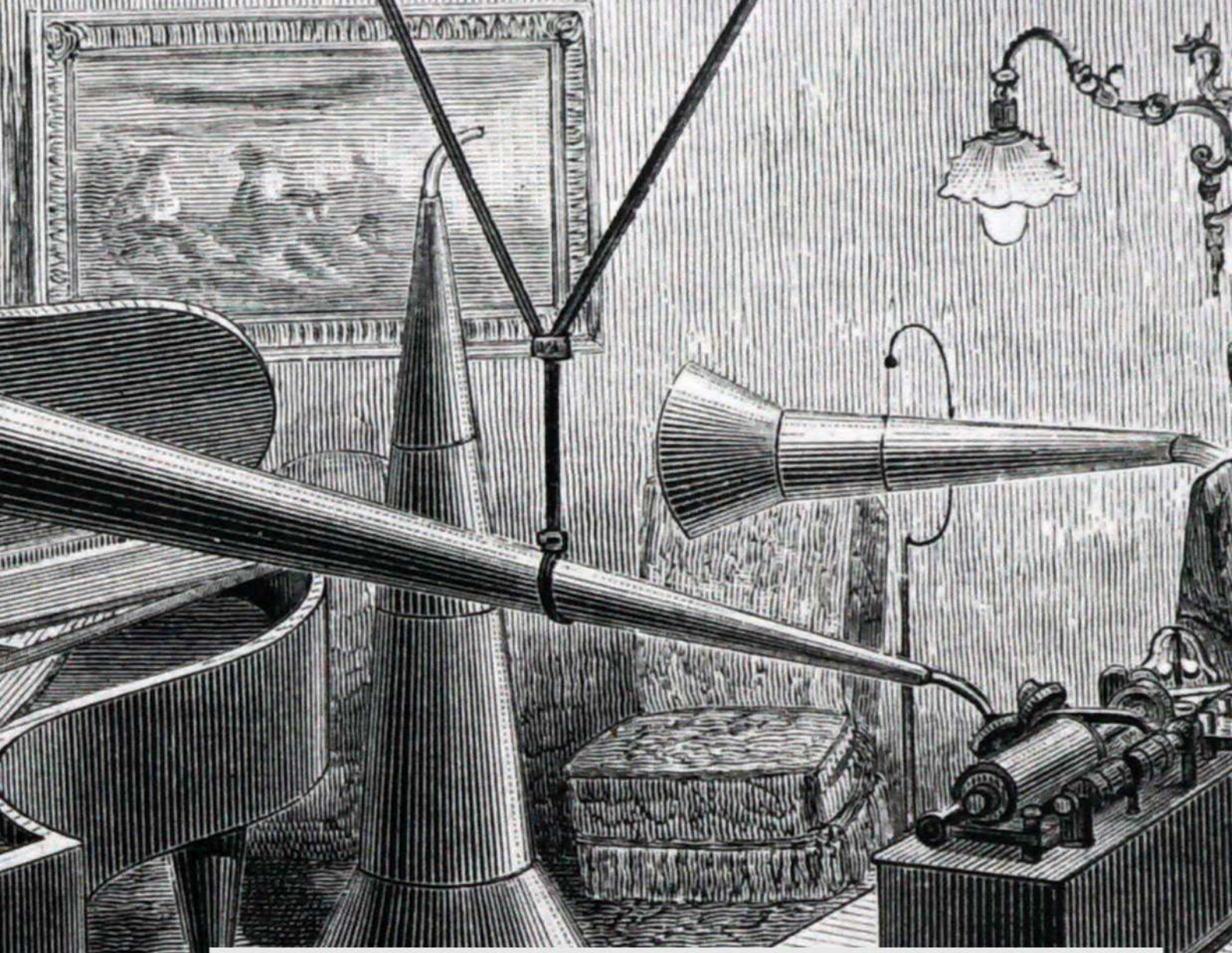
6 Make Other Changes You can change the colour scheme in a similar way (click 'Color Themes', then double-click a row of colours to apply them). To change what information is shown about each person in your tree, click 'Box Items' and import additional information from the 'Available Items' box. Click 'OK' when done.



9 Print Your Chart You'll notice that the chart is populated with red dotted lines. Zoom out using the controls on the left, and you'll see these correspond to sheets of paper. When you switch to the 'Publish' tab, you can print across multiple sheets of paper to create a wall chart or export your file as an image to share with others.



Thomas Edison's Phonograph is used to record a pianist in Paris, France, in 1889



THE RECORDING REVOLUTION

Jonathan Scott reveals how the arrival of recorded sound changed the music industry and made many of our ancestors avid listeners

Today, it's hard to imagine life without recorded music. We're used to having sound on tap, listening to whatever we want, whenever we want. But rewind 150 years and the only options for enjoying music were either seeing it live or learning it yourself.

That all changed in 1877 in a workshop in Menlo Park, New Jersey, USA, where Thomas Edison and his team of engineers were working on a new kind of telephone. On 18 July, while experimenting with a mouthpiece, they managed to imprint sound waves on a strip of wax-covered paper. By the end of the year, this world-first had morphed into the Phonograph, a simple, lathe-like device that could record and play back speech on tin foil. The invention, announced in the magazine *Scientific American*, made headlines across the world.

The tin-foil Phonograph was a wonder of the age that astounded audiences at public demonstrations in London, Brighton, New York and Melbourne, Australia. The *Brighton Gazette* reported from an exhibition at the Royal Pavilion where "laughter is reproduced, accent and brogue… there is no form of utterance which may not be 'bottled' up in it for future use".

In 1879 a writer imagined a near future where "some

GETTY IMAGES

of the great singers will be induced to sing into the ear of the Phonograph… and we shall hear the actual voice of [opera stars] Christine Nilsson or Annie Louise Cary ground out at every corner".

Primitive Device

The reality was that the tin-foil Phonograph was largely useless. Sound quality was poor, the foil was prone to tearing, and removing the foil so you could make another recording destroyed the original. And Edison was soon distracted by the more profitable venture of inventing the light bulb, leaving the Phonograph to fade from the public eye.

In 1886 Alexander Graham Bell launched the more advanced Graphophone, which recorded onto narrow card tubes covered in wax. Its moderate success forced Edison back to the table. The resulting Perfected Phonograph ran on batteries and carved sound into solid wax cylinders that could be shaved and reused with relative ease.

Edison was convinced his own improved model would become a must-have office gizmo. However, firms that formed across the USA to exploit the invention struggled to make a profit. The only people making money were canny operators who installed Phonographs in public spaces, added listening tubes and charged punters to listen. This created a demand for novel sounds, and so in the late 1880s the first purposeful programme of recording music began.

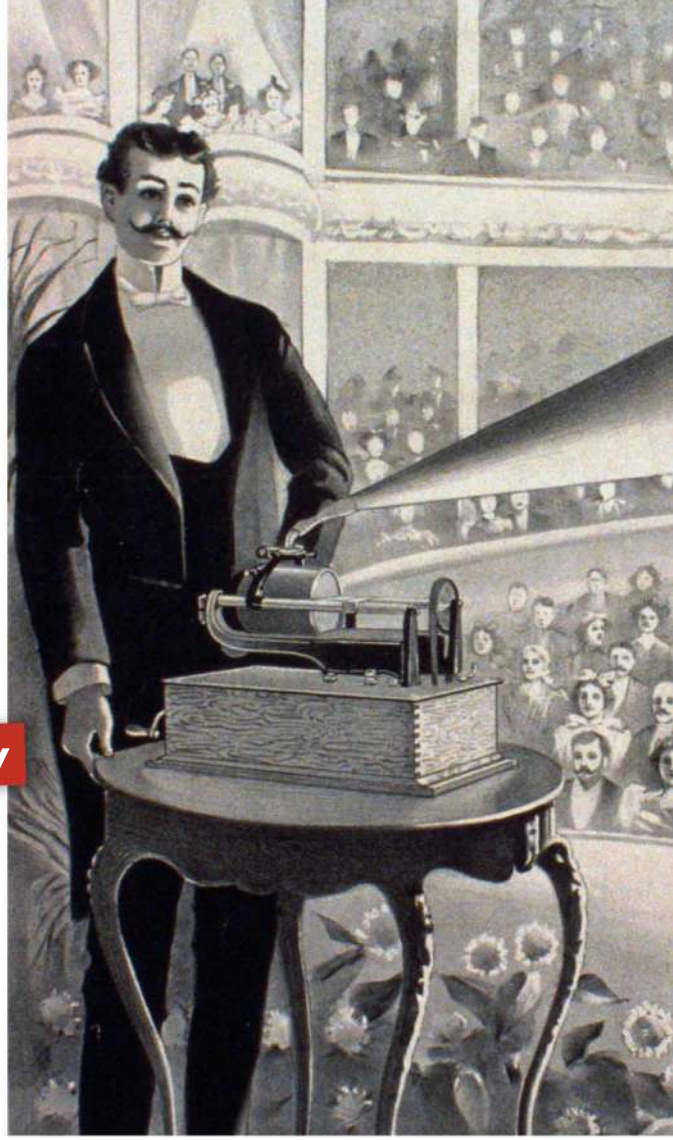
The fledgling recording industry had a rustic, DIY aesthetic

In Britain, a select number of Perfected Phonographs were on tour, being demonstrated to rapt audiences in theatres and village halls. In May 1889, for example, a reporter from the *Hastings & St Leonards Observer* in Sussex witnessed a lecture at the town's Royal Concert Hall.

"Mr [Charles] Steytler commenced by speaking, laughing, crowing, coughing, shouting, and quacking like a duck into the transmitter, and having exhausted one of the wax tubes on which the sounds are recorded, proceeded to reproduce them, which was done by means of a trumpet, which magnified the sounds and brought them forth into the room."

Just days later, one Prof Douglas Archibald descended on St Leonards to give a second demonstration: "[The audience] heard reproduced the playing of a band, in which not only could the bass and treble clearly be distinguished, but after the music had stopped, the cheering of Mr Edison's men, who had listened to it in his laboratory, could be distinctly heard."

This delight and wonder fuelled a demand for music. The fledgling recording industry had a rustic, DIY aesthetic. Lots of instruments simply didn't work very well in the limited frequency range of the 1890s. First-generation recording stars weren't necessarily the best or most popular singers, but those whose voices worked well with the technology. One of the first was John Yorke AtLee, a clerk by day and moustachioed whistling hit machine by night.



An advertising poster for Edison's Phonographs dating from the 1870s

GETTY IMAGES

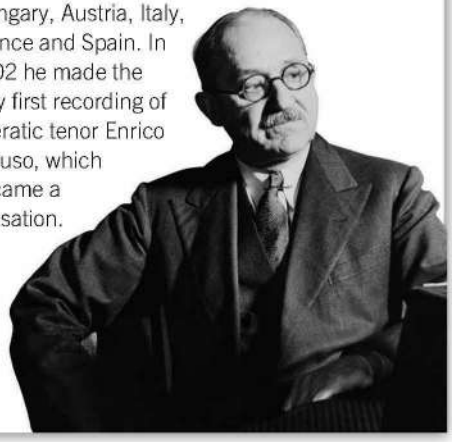
Fred Gaisberg 1873–1951

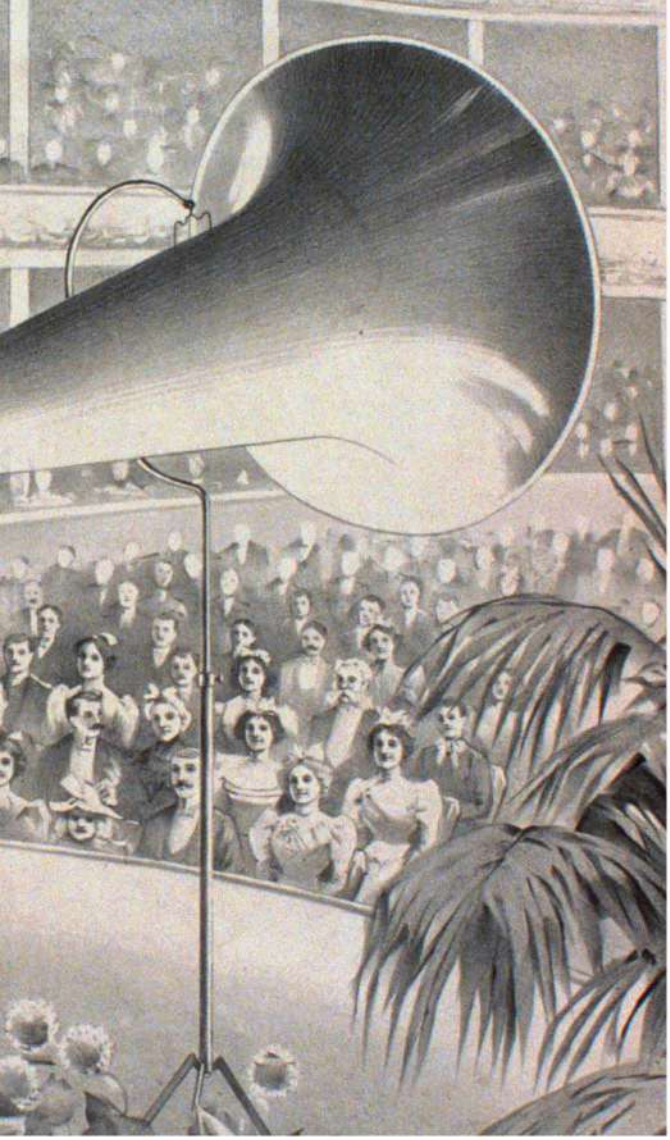
Meet the American who set up Britain's first recording studio

Born in Washington, DC, pianist and talent scout Fred Gaisberg crossed the Atlantic to set up Britain's first recording studio at 31 Maiden Lane, just off the Strand in Central London. At first Gaisberg had just one recording machine, and an upright piano mounted on a movable platform. The West End location was ideal for scouting talent, and one of Gaisberg's first scores was a fellow American named Burt Shepard; he became an early star in Britain by remaking many of the popular comic songs that had already been hits across the pond.

Gaisberg was skilled at attracting known performers, alongside a procession of less familiar actors, singers, whistlers and amateurs. In his autobiography, he wrote that stout was the drink of choice in the studio.

Gaisberg would accompany many of the acts in those early years, although company secretary Amy Williams also doubled as the firm's in-house pianist. With business booming, he then toured Europe with portable recording equipment, cutting hundreds of discs in improvised studios in Germany, Hungary, Austria, Italy, France and Spain. In 1902 he made the very first recording of operatic tenor Enrico Caruso, which became a sensation.





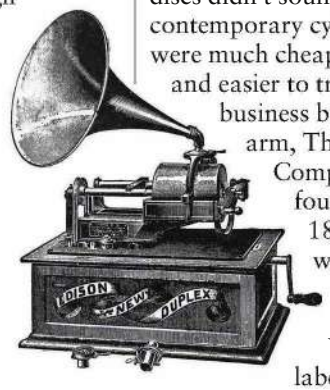
Bestselling unit-shifters of the 1890s tended to be brass bands, comic songs or spoken-word skits. For a time, Washington, DC, New York, Chicago in Illinois, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, were the global epicentres of this new cottage industry, and soon every record company had its own brass band, churning out cylinders of patriotic marches.

Recording Practicalities

At first there was no way to mass-produce a record: if AtLee wanted to sell 100 copies of his signature tune *The Mocking Bird* (recorded 1891), he had to perform it 100 times. Brass bands would play before banked walls of 10 recording horns, knocking out popular marches in batches of 10. If the cylinders looked to be running out of space before they had reached the end of a piece, the conductor would raise a hand and the band would stop. If they ended early, they might fill dead space with cheering or clapping. The records were distributed in simple boxes, with no labels, so cylinders from this period start with an announcer bellowing out what you're about to hear.

Around the turn of the century, more and more evidence of the trade begins to appear in British directories and newspapers. Kelly's Directory of Sussex from 1905, for example, has a listing of "Phonographs – Dealers In" sandwiched between pheasant breeders and photo engravers.

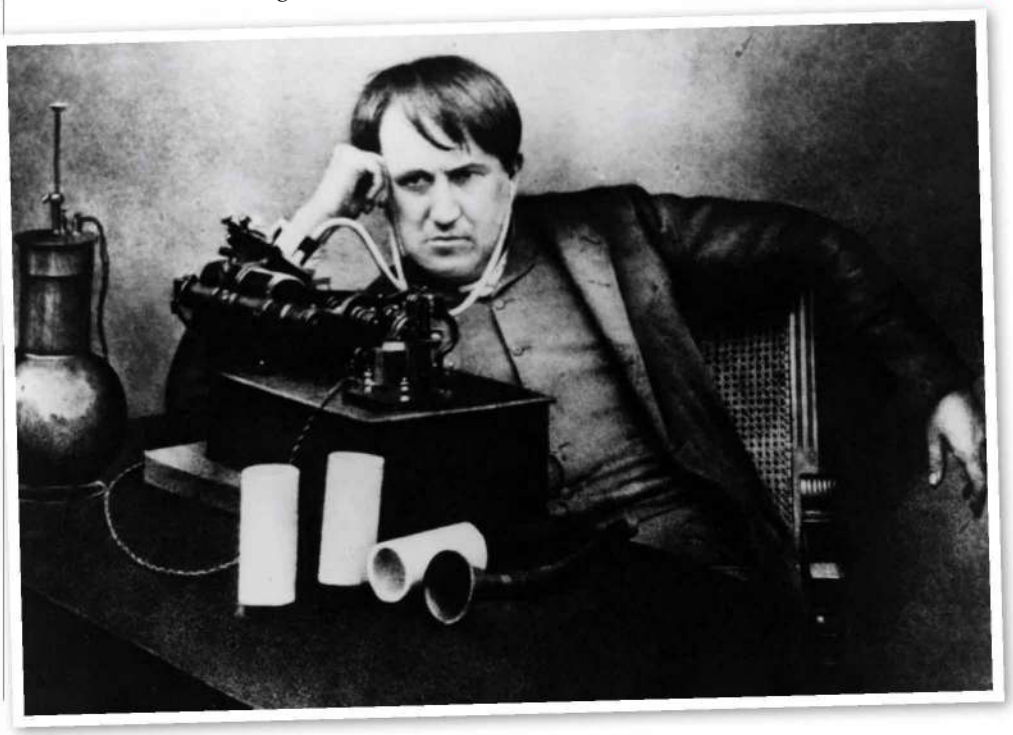
Many of the early high-street businesses were bicycle shops, which sold and repaired phonographs as a sideline. These often catered for middle-class music fans, while upper-class punters were more likely to use London's musical-instrument shops and department stores.



Spillers Records in Cardiff was founded in 1894 by Henry Spiller, making it the oldest specialist record shop in the world that's still open. London-based musical-instrument firm Barnett Samuel, which would form the seed of the label Decca, entered the fray in 1901, while Flaunty's Phono Stores opened across the road from the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, on London's South Bank two years later. William Flaunty was already selling records to friends when he was blinded by an accident at work, and decided to make his side hustle a full-time career.

By this time the first disc-shaped records were finding a toehold in the market. They were pioneered by German-US inventor Emile Berliner, who perfected a method of stamping out copies from a single master recording. Even though first-generation discs didn't sound as good as contemporary cylinders, they were much cheaper to produce and easier to transport. With business booming, a British arm, The Gramophone Company, was founded in April 1898. This was the parent organisation for the His Master's Voice (HMV) label. It would eventually merge with Columbia to form Electric and Musical Industries Ltd (EMI).

This was a seasonal trade. The machines were luxury items that tended to sell well in the autumn and the run-up to Christmas, then dwindle to almost nothing in the new year. Gramophones did well in prosperous, urbane areas, while cheaper German models – often disguised under patriotic names like Baron, Monarch or Marquis – did better in modest districts.



Thomas Edison listens to his Perfected Phonograph

GETTY IMAGES

Karl Gerhard, a street performer photographed c1915, hoped to earn a living from taking a gramophone on a worldwide tour

The low-cost Puck was a simple wind-up device on a lyre-shaped cast-iron base that opened up the world of music to the masses.

Two-Step 'Poppies'

By now music reviews were becoming the norm in the specialist press, such as the *Talking Machine News*, as well as dailies and broadsheets. In January 1909, Wales' *Weekly Mail* reviewed a raft of new songs, noting that "dancing people" would appreciate Columbia orchestra's "two-step 'Poppies'".

Over this period the average price of a cylinder reduced by half, and that of a popular 10-inch disc by three quarters. Nevertheless music was still out of reach for many. In March 1910 a vicar visited a Carmarthen workhouse, playing inmates a selection from eight discs that prompted "storms of laughter", and at a New Year's party on the Isle of Man, "great pleasure was derived from Mr Frank Page's massive Pathéphone".

As machines grew louder they appeared in public spaces, including an electric gramophone mounted on a platform that overlooked the hall of London's Science Museum, which often attracted crowds of dancers. By 1929 attendants had been told to terminate demonstrations if visitors became too "unruly".

Shellac 78 rpm records had become the dominant format, and remained so until vinyl's arrival in 1948. But not everyone was happy about music on tap. In 1906 US composer and conductor John Philip Sousa, an early recording star, predicted a bleak future in his essay 'The Menace of Mechanical Music': "The child becomes indifferent to practice, for when music can be heard in the homes without the labor of study and close application, and without the slow process of acquiring a technique, it will be simply a question of time when the amateur disappears entirely, and with him a host of vocal and instrumental teachers."

Heaven knows what Sousa would make of Spotify.

JONATHAN SCOTT writes about vinyl records and genealogical ones. His latest book is *Into the Groove: The Story of Sound From Tin Foil to Vinyl* (Bloomsbury, 2023)

Resources

Take your research further

BOOK

Shellac and Swing!
Bruce Lindsay
Fonthill Media, 2020
Lindsay tells the story of the gramophone's golden age.

WEBSITES

British Newspaper Archive

w **britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk**
Historic newspapers contain all sorts of articles and adverts related to the music industry. Also try free sources like the National Library of Wales' site Welsh Newspapers (**newspapers.library.wales**) and the US Library of Congress' Chronicling America (**chroniclingamerica.loc.gov**).

First Sounds

w **firstsounds.org**
This site is run by a US collective working to digitise humanity's earliest sound recordings.

Historical Directories of England & Wales

w **tinyurl.com/uni-leic-sco**
Here you can search directories for references – use words such as 'phonograph' or 'gramophone', not 'record player' or 'turntable'.

Internet Archive

w **archive.org**
This vast site includes issues of early magazines such as *The Phonoscope* (launched 1896) and *Talking Machine News* (1903).

Record Labels

w **mgthomas.co.uk/index.htm**
This website provides information on British 78 rpm record labels. There's also **78rpm.club**.

The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

w **clpgs.org.uk**
Formed in 1919, this is the world's oldest recorded-music society. You can listen to early recordings in its online Sound Library.

GETTY IMAGES

MERCHANDISE

BACK ISSUES
If you've missed an issue, here's a chance to complete your collection – and find out how to subscribe on page 22

Issue 218
JUNE 2024
- D-Day 80 years on
- Coal miners
- Irish research
- Derbyshire kin

Issue 219
JULY 2024
- Baptism records
- Medieval research
- Canadian Prairies
- Strathclyde kin

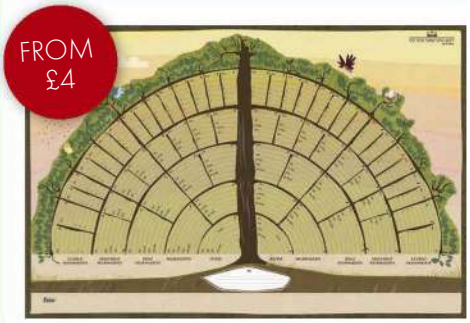
Issue 220
AUGUST 2024
- Best free websites
- Scottish marriages
- Sporting ancestors
- South Yorkshire

Issue 221
SEPTEMBER 2024
- *WDYTYA?* turns 20
- Irish Famine
- Royal Navy
- Bedfordshire kin

Issue 222
OCTOBER 2024
- Grow your tree
- Second Boer War
- Jamaican research
- County Durham

Issue 223
NOVEMBER 2024
- Online newspapers
- Methodist relations
- Scottish deaths
- East Sussex kin

WALL CHART
Commemorate your family tree with our wall chart



Share your family history with your loved ones by displaying it on our popular wall chart, which measures 864 x 572mm. It is printed on thick, matt paper and comes folded.

MAGAZINE STORAGE
Order a file today to preserve your issues

Keep your collection of *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine* in perfect condition by ordering one of our files. Each one stores a year's worth of magazines, and is suitable for issues dated November 2018 onwards.

CERTIFICATE BINDER
Keep your precious archive safe for posterity

Store your certificates away safely in an exclusive *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine* certificate binder, which includes five acid-free plastic A4 wallets to protect your most valuable documents.

SUBSCRIBERS! LOG IN & SAVE UP TO 25%

	SUBSCRIBER*			NON-SUBSCRIBER		
	UK	EUROPE	R.O.W.	UK	EUROPE	R.O.W.
BACK ISSUES	£4.79	£5.59	£6.39	£5.99	£7.35	£8.35
CERTIFICATE BINDER	£12	£14.25	£15	£16	£19	£20
	CODE WHCERTBIDA					
WALL CHART	£4	£5	£5	£5	£5	£5
	CODE WHWALLA					
MAGAZINE STORAGE	£8.49	£9.45	£10.80	£9.99	£10.50	£12
	CODE WHMAGBOXA					

CALL **03330 162120**

OR VISIT **OURMEDIASHOP.COM/BACKISSUES-WDYTYA**

OR **OURMEDIASHOP.COM/OFFERS/MERCHANDISE** FOR WALL CHARTS, STORAGE AND BINDERS

*You will need your subscriber number to access discounts online and by phone. UK calls will cost the same as other standard fixed-line numbers (starting 01 or 02) and are included as part of any inclusive or free minutes allowances (if offered by your phone tariff). Outside of free call packages call charges from mobile phones will cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Lines are open Monday to Friday 9am–5pm. If calling from overseas, call +44 1604 973728

EUREKA MOMENT
How a reader broke down a research brick wall

'DNA Testing Helped Me Find My Great Grandfather'

Sarah Ward has spent years unravelling a family mystery that dates back to Edwardian times. DNA and a service record from the First World War provided pivotal clues, as she explained to **Gail Dixon**

My grandfather Garfield Evans was a Welsh first-language speaker, tall and broad, who smoked a pipe filled with 'baccy'.

He was very indulgent towards us grandchildren – there was always a toy waiting for us whenever we visited.

Garfield worked near Cardiff as a stonemason at St Fagans National Museum of History (**museum.wales/stfagans/**). There are 50 historic buildings on site, including a Victorian school, a medieval prince's hall and a blacksmith's forge.

In 1951, Garfield and his colleagues dismantled and rebuilt Abernodwydd Farmhouse, a timber-framed building dating back to 1678. It originally stood in Llangadfan, Powys, and was transported over 100 miles to St Fagans where the highly skilled team restored it precisely.

SARAH WARD is an author of crime and gothic fiction who lives in Lampeter, West Wales. She has been researching her family tree for 13 years

I've loved visiting St Fagans and seeing a bed inside the farmhouse that is covered in daisy-wheel carvings – these were to protect sleepers from harm at night. I've used this as the basis of my latest novel, *Death Rites*.

My Brick Wall

Garfield was born in 1909 in the village of Abergorlech in Carmarthenshire. He grew up believing that his parents were stonemason David Evans and his wife Miriam Davies. Garfield had eight 'siblings', including an older 'sister' called Mary (known as Polly) who was born in 1884. Sadly, he felt that his siblings didn't have much time for him, although he was very close to David and Miriam.

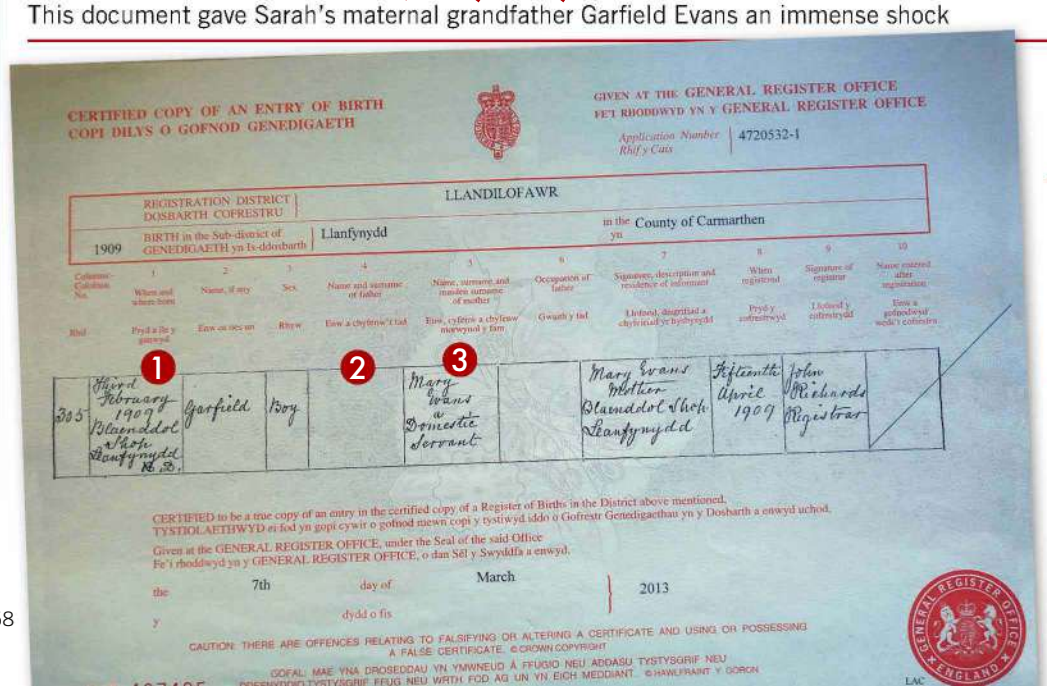
Garfield discovered the reason behind his siblings' coolness in 1932 when he was about to get married to Sarah Blodwen Thomas. He needed his birth certificate in order to marry, and when he received it he was shocked to discover that Polly was listed as his mother. The father's name was left blank, and he realised that David and Miriam were actually his grandparents.

My mother Enfys loved telling me stories about her family, and this was the one we talked about most. As far as Mum was concerned, the identity of Garfield's father would always remain an enigma.

As a crime writer, I love a good

Birth Record, 1909

This document gave Sarah's maternal grandfather Garfield Evans an immense shock


CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH
COPI DILYS O GOFNOD GENEDIGAETH

GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE
FE'I RHODDWYD YN Y GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number / Rhif y Cais: 4720532-1

REGISTRATION DISTRICT / DOSBARTH COFRESTRU: LLANDILOFAWR

1909 BIRTH in the Sub-district of / GENEDIGAETH yn Is-ddosbarth: Llanfynydd in the / yn County of Carmarthen

Columns / Colofnau No.	1 When and where born / Pryd a ile y ganwyd	2 Name, if any / Enw os oes un	3 Sex / Rhyw	4 Name and surname of father / Enw a chyfenw'r tad	5 Name, surname and maiden surname of mother / Enw, cyfenw a chyfenw morwynol y fam	6 Occupation of father / Gwaith y tad	7 Signature, description and residence of informant / Llofnod, disgrifiad a chyfeiriad yr hysbyrydd	8 When registered / Pryd y cofrestrwyd	9 Signature of registrar / Llofnod y cofrestrydd	10 Name entered after registration / Enw a gofnodwyd wedi'r cofrestru
Rhif										
305	Third February 1909 Blaenddol Shop Llanfynydd N.D.	Garfield	Boy		Mary Evans a Domestic Servant		Mary Evans Mother Blaenddol Shop Llanfynydd	Fifteenth April 1909	John Richards Registrar	

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.
TYSTIOLAETHWYD ei fod yn gopi cywir o gofnod mewn copi y tystiwyd iddo o Gofrestr Genedigaethau yn y Dosbarth a enwyd uchod.
Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office
Fe'i rhoddwyd yn y GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, o dan Sêl y Swyddfa a enwyd.

the 7th day of March 2013
y dydd o fis

CAUTION: THERE ARE OFFENCES RELATING TO FALSIFYING OR ALTERING A CERTIFICATE AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE. © CROWN COPYRIGHT

GOFAL: MAE YNA DROSEDDAU YN YMWNEUD Â FFUGIO NEU ADDASU TYSTYSGRIF NEU DDEFNYDDIO TYSTYSGRIF FFUG NEU WRTH FOD AG UN YN EICH MEDDIANT. © HAWLFRAINT Y GORON

1 Birth
Garfield was born on 3 February 1909, in Llanfynydd.

2 Father's Details
The section "Name and surname of father" was left blank. It's believed that Garfield never found out who his biological father was.

3 Mary Evans
Garfield grew up believing that Mary – known as Polly – was his older sister. She was, in fact, his mother.

mystery and the identity of your great grandfather is a fascinating one to track down. Census records revealed that the Evans family often employed casual labourers, and I wondered if he was one of them. However, I was scrambling around in the dark.

My Eureka Moment

In 2020, I took a DNA test with Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk/dna**). I recognised most of my immediate matches, but there was a Miss Richardson who was showing as a half second cousin on Mum's side. This suggested that we shared one great grandparent.

She DNA-matched with my cousin Gareth, but none of Mum's maternal relations. I was fairly sure that she must have been related to Garfield's side.

I messaged Miss Richardson and she responded saying that she knew little about her family but she allowed me to use her tree, which was quite small.

I managed to trace her paternal grandfather Charles Richardson, who married in London in 1937 and gave his father's name and occupation as an attendant at a Turkish baths.

The attendant – whose name is withheld here for reasons of sensitivity – could be my great grandfather. How did he end up in rural Carmarthenshire in 1908?

The trail went cold at this point, despite extensive research on my part and Gareth's. Then, one snowy Christmas, I recalled that Welsh people often use their middle names in everyday life. So, I entered the middle name of the Turkish-bath attendant into Ancestry with the surname Richardson, and up popped a record for his birth in 1890 in St Pancras, London.

Garfield in his special-constable uniform

Then his First World War service record appeared, and it revealed that he'd enlisted in the Army Service Corps in Carmarthen in 1914.

I couldn't believe it – the record stated that before joining up this man was a wagoner and lived near Brechfa, a village neighbouring Abergorlech where Garfield was born. The record also named his wife and children, including Charles Richardson – my DNA match's grandfather.

I don't know how my great grandfather ended up in Wales after being born in London. It seems that he and Polly must have had an affair in 1908, two years before he married.

My Breakthrough

The service record stated that my great grandfather was a "good groom, willing and intelligent", which was encouraging. It wasn't to last, however. By 1921, his wife was living in London having been deserted by her husband. The same year, a warrant was issued for his arrest for stealing £11 10s in Treasury notes.

This photograph of Sarah's stonemason grandfather Garfield Evans was taken at St Fagans National Museum of History

Garfield followed a very different course in life, becoming a deacon at his local chapel and serving as a special constable during the Second World War. He retired after a long career as a stonemason, and passed away in Cardiff in 1982.

I think that he was better off being brought up by his lovely grandparents, even though they hid his origins from him.

HAVE YOU BROKEN THROUGH A BRICK WALL?

Share your family story with us and you could appear in the magazine!

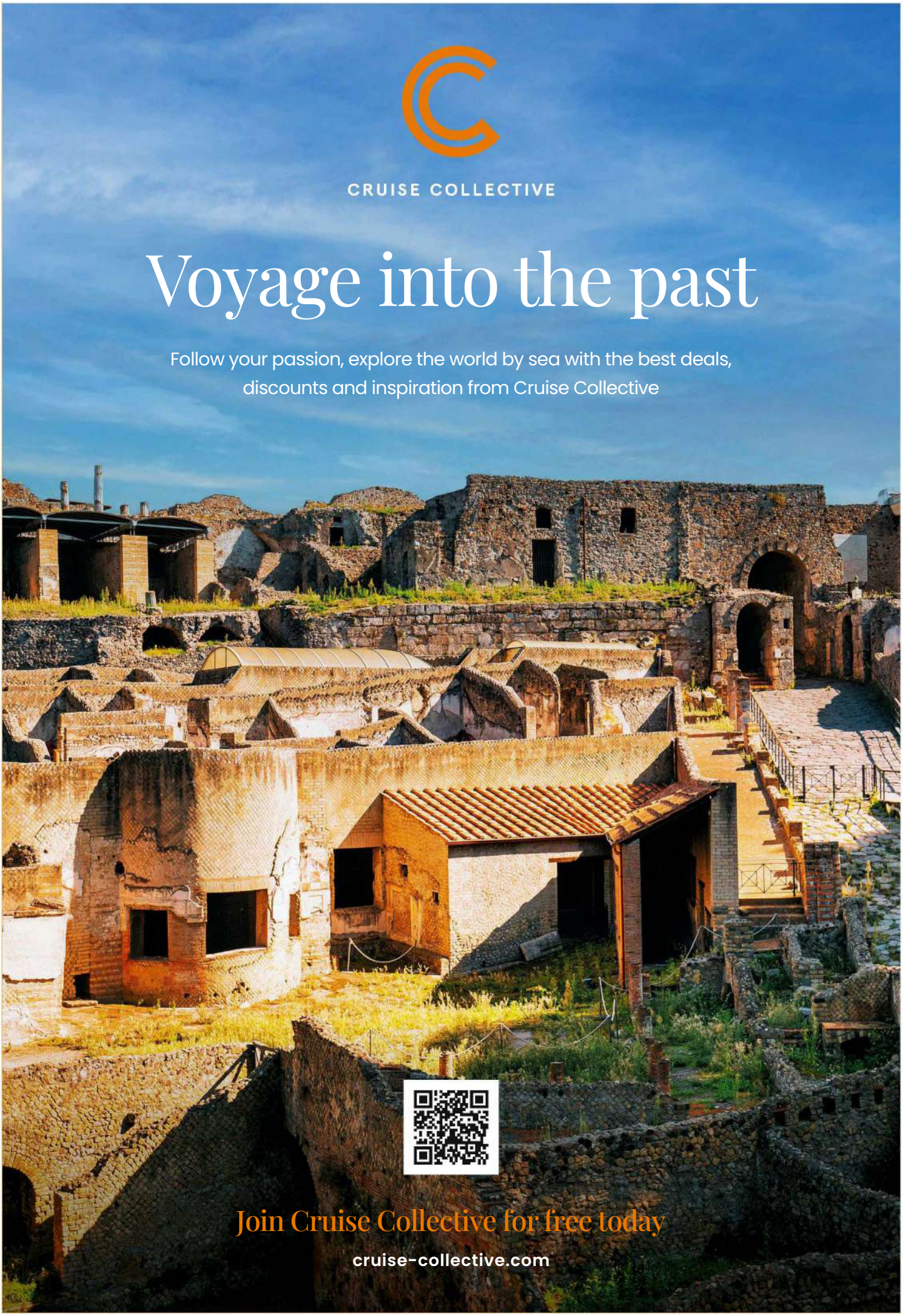
Please write to us at the address on page 6 or email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

Sarah's latest novel *Death Rites* was published on 3 October by Canelo Crime (RRP £9.99)

Reader Tips

If you have a brick wall, here are Sarah's recommendations

- DNA testing is wonderful – use what matches can tell you, and work through the connections.
- Keep trying – I had to let my tree 'rest' for a year before I uncovered my great grandfather's service record.
- Our ancestors may have used middle names, or nicknames, that don't match with other records. Stay open-minded.


CRUISE COLLECTIVE
Voyage into the past
Follow your passion, explore the world by sea with the best deals, discounts and inspiration from Cruise Collective
Join Cruise Collective for free today
cruise-collective.com

What's On

Email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk* to feature your event here for free

PICK OF THE MONTH

Scottish Indexes presents its latest conference

Scottish Indexes Conference XXVI

23 November

w **scottishindexes.com/conference.aspx**

Explore your Scottish roots with this free online event

First introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic, Scottish Indexes' online conferences about researching Scottish family history are still going strong. For the latest event, the talks are 'Housing the Miners' by Kay Williams, 'Town and Gown – St Andrews University Archive' by Sarah Rodriguez, 'Historic Scotland in the Archives: Using Historic Environment Scotland Archives to Explore Historic Sites Around Scotland' by Joseph Waterfield, 'Using the Internet and PRONI for Northern Irish Research' by regular *Who Do You Think You Are? Magazine* contributor Chris Paton, 'Beyond ScotlandsPeople: Breaking Down Brick Walls in Scottish Research' by Alison Spring, and 'On the Boll: Agricultural and Landholding Terminology in Scottish Records' by Robert Urquhart. Each talk is shown twice to accommodate attendees from different time zones. Free, donations welcome.

IN PERSON

Being Jersey – Stories Of Our Island

Until 31 December 2026

a Jersey Museum, St Helier
t 01534 633300
w **jerseyheritage.org/visit/whats-on/la-terrie-djerri/**

This new exhibition explores life on Jersey over millennia. Free.

London Talks: Women's Football

14 November

a The London Archives
t 020 7332 3820
w **tinyurl.com/eventbrite-womens-football**

Prof Jean Williams will examine the history of British women's football at this event. £16.96.

Sheffield's Pioneering South Asian Settlers, 1917–1947

14 November

a Weston Park Museum, Sheffield
w **tinyurl.com/sheff-mus-south-asian**

David Holland will discuss the early history of South Asian migration to Sheffield. Free, donations welcome.

Surrey Family History Fair

16 November

a Woking Leisure Centre
e *wsfhsbookings@gmail.com*
w **wsfhs.co.uk/pages/openday.php**

West Surrey Family History Society is holding a fair to celebrate its 50th anniversary. There will be an opportunity to carry out research, see exhibits, seek advice, and meet representatives of other local and family history societies. Free.

Caterpillars, Guinea Pigs And Goldfish

28 November

a International Bomber Command Centre, Lincoln
t 01522 514755
w **tinyurl.com/ibcc-cater**

This talk in the centre's Lecture & Supper Series sees retired RAF squadron leader Art Stacey look at the different clubs in the history of aviation, particularly the Goldfish Club for people who have escaped an aircraft by parachuting into water. £16.

ONLINE

Institute Of Heraldic And Genealogical Studies

Various dates

w **ihgs.ac.uk/calendar**

Upcoming family history tutorials from the IHGS include 'Tracking Down Your Railway Ancestors' with Chris Broom (6 November, £10) and 'Migration and Early Modern England' with Joe Saunders (25 November, £10).

Navigating The Maps Website

6 November

w **nls.uk/whats-on/navigating-the-maps-website/**

The National Library of Scotland's free maps website is one of the biggest resources for searching historic maps of the UK online. You can find out how to make the most of the site with this hands-on workshop. Free.

Patient Voices From The Victorian Asylum

6 November

w **tinyurl.com/eventbrite-patient-voices**

During the 19th century, farming was heralded as being therapeutic for patients in psychiatric institutions. But how did they experience farm work, and what impact did it have on them? Sarah Holland's illustrated talk in the Curious Histories series, which raises funds for charity, uses various documents to provide an insight into patient perspectives of work as therapy. Minimum donation £2.

Pharos Tutors

11 November

w **pharostutors.com/courses**

The latest online genealogy courses from Pharos Tutors are 'Researching Scottish Ancestral Crisis' with Chris Paton and 'In Sickness and in Death – Researching the Ill-health and Death of Your Ancestors' with Janet Few. Both courses start on 11 November and last five weeks, and each one costs £70.

Secrets Of The National Archives: Shakespeare's Will

15 November

w **tinyurl.com/eventbrite-tna-shakespeare**

The National Archives' head of legal records Amanda Bevan will discuss one of the most famous wills in literary history. Pay what you can, £5 suggested.

Hertfordshire Sources

23 November

w **tinyurl.com/eventbrite-herts-sources**

In this event from Hertfordshire Family History Society Felicity Brimblecombe shares her expert tips for researching forebears who lived in the county. Free.

BOOK AHEAD

Learn how to trace illegitimate relations with this online talk

Illegitimacy In England & Wales, 1837–1960: Birth Registers & Beyond With Rebecca Probert

7 December

w **tinyurl.com/sog-illegitimacy-probert**

Historian and professor of law at the University of Exeter Rebecca Probert explains how illegitimate births were registered after the introduction of civil registration, and the legal and social context of illegitimacy, in this event from the Society of Genealogists. £10.

Around Britain

Northamptonshire

With registers digitised and the county archive's website levelling up, it's good news for remote researchers says **Jonathan Scott**

Since our last visit to the county in December 2020 there have been major changes behind the scenes. The archive service is no longer run by Northamptonshire County Council which was abolished in 2021, and is instead managed by West Northamptonshire Council: **westnorthants.gov.uk/northamptonshire-archives-service**.

However, its remit remains countywide nevertheless, and it looks after records relating to the whole of ancient and modern Northamptonshire, including the Soke of Peterborough.

Peterborough has its own city archives (**peterboroughlibraries.org.uk/archive-collections**) based at the central library, home to electoral registers, newspapers, school records, medieval charters and local-authority records. Unique collections include the archives of engineering firm Baker Perkins; Deacon's School, which was established in 1722 by wool merchant and philanthropist Thomas Deacon; the Fox & Vergette Collection, which has details of property sales and auctions in the area; and the Kitchin Collection: about 2,000 photographs that were taken in and around Peterborough during the 1960s by lifelong resident Ramon Kitchin (1929–1999).

One of the locks on the Grand Union Canal in the village of Stoke Bruerne

Many Archives To Check

The Diocese of Peterborough, which was founded in 1541, covers historic Northamptonshire, Rutland and an area of Cambridgeshire north of the River Nene. But the part of Peterborough south of the Nene falls within the Diocese of Ely. As a result there are several archives that may hold useful evidence relating to your kin. Norfolk Record Office, for example, has tithe maps and apportionments

GETTY IMAGES

A farm labourer holds a horse attached to a wagon near the village of Hellidon, c1910

for the Diocese of Ely (**archives.norfolk.gov.uk/article/31075/The-Diocese-of-Ely-DE**), while Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**) has a set of about 8,000 marriage licences from collections in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk (the parishes are listed at **bit.ly/fmp-cambs-marr-licences**). If you need some guidance, you can try the team at Peterborough & District Family History Society (**peterborofhs.org.uk**).

Indeed between them, Findmypast and Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**) have a great deal of material for researching in Northamptonshire.

Ancestry has digitised parish registers from the county archive – a massive combined collection of more than four million records covering 1532–1812 (**ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/9198**), then separate baptism, marriage and burial collections up to 1912, alongside Church of England confirmations (1870–1911).

Findmypast has useful parish indexes compiled by Northamptonshire Family History Society (**northants-fhs.org**), alongside probate material and 'Northamptonshire Military Tribunals 1916–1918'. This is an index to case records of appeals for exemption from military service that are preserved at Northamptonshire Archives, providing name, age, residence, occupation, reason for appeal, outcome, date of the decision and additional information.

The FamilySearch county wiki lists the major collections available (**familysearch.org/en/wiki/Northamptonshire,_England_Online_Genealogy_Records**), and will also lead you to the site's own material, which includes some nonconformist records (1840–1894) and an index to and images of Roman Catholic registers for Northamptonshire, as well as Lincolnshire, Oxfordshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Berkshire and Worcestershire.

We are always working to add more and more detail to our catalogue

Sarah Bridges, strategic manager at Northamptonshire Archives, adds that there are exciting online developments as well. "We are always working to add more and more detail about collections to the service's catalogue, and in the autumn a new website will be in place that it is hoped will make it much easier and quicker to search. Once this is launched the service will be keen to receive feedback, but at present an exact starting date for the new system is not known."

One of the major new ▶

GETTY IMAGES

Free Online Records

This month's unmissable resources are nonconformist records, trade directories, 18th-century militia lists, Civil War petitions and a calendar of wills

Calendar Of Wills

w **tinyurl.com/arch-nants-wills**

The Internet Archive has this volume of wills from Northampton and Rutland that were proved in the court of the Archdeacon of Northampton (1510–1652).

Civil War Petitions

w **www.civilwarpetitions.ac.uk**

Find out how the county's wounded soldiers, war widows and other bereaved family members petitioned for financial relief in the wake of the English Civil Wars, drawn from quarter sessions.

Nonconformist Records

w **tinyurl.com/fs-nonconform-nants**

This FamilySearch collection (1840–1894) contains Northamptonshire christening, marriage and burial records from various religious groups including Methodist, Society of Friends (Quakers), Catholic, Presbyterian and Baptist congregations.

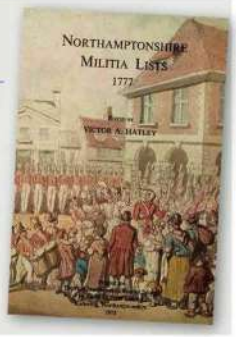
Directories

w **tinyurl.com/sco-northants**

The University of Leicester's source of digitised trade directories Special Collections Online has 14 volumes covering Northamptonshire, the earliest dating from 1841.

Militia Lists

w **tinyurl.com/nrs-down**



Here you can explore Northamptonshire Record Society's free publications including transcribed militia lists from 1777, compiled by local constables and recording men aged between 18 and 45 who were liable to serve.

This photograph of Market Street in Wellingborough dates from 1920

▶ accessions is the core records of St Andrew's Hospital. This was initially the Northampton General Lunatic Asylum opened by public subscription in 1838. However, it later became an asylum run as a private hospital when the county asylum opened in 1876.

Asylum Registers

Sarah says, "It was and remains a leading hospital in the treatment of mental health, and patients were sent there for treatment from across the country. This accession is important because it includes the main patient case registers from 1838 onwards – local poet John Clare was famously a patient for some time – plus admission registers."

Staff have discovered that some case notes appear to be missing from the first 50 years, while later ones are not accessible because of data protection.

However, any genealogists with an ancestor who might have been treated at the institution before 1924 can ask staff to check the indexes. Then they can either visit to see the records in person, or ask for digital copies to be made for a fee. Sarah adds a note: "Cataloguing is ongoing and is likely to uncover more records of value to family historians."

Another project is working to catalogue the rate books created by borough and district councils across the county that are held by Northamptonshire Archives. The first task involved checking each shelf across three repositories to note the presence of any rate books and which particular parish/district they covered. The books extend over a long period, from the earliest dating from 1839 up to the 1970s, and cover poor, general, special and water rates.

"The member of staff responsible, who is kindly funded by Northamptonshire Family History Society, has been tackling the mammoth task of cataloguing the rate books for the town of Northampton itself. At last count there were approximately 1,400 of these," Sarah reveals.

The current focus is on working out which years and types of rate books survive for each ward. Once this is complete, it should be significantly easier to locate relevant entries.

"Researchers can then be encouraged to use them to track down ancestors who may have moved house, find them between census years before the First World War, and indeed fill gaps in any of the electoral-register holdings. They are also a good source for house historians."

Migration Records

Another team is listing records for black and minority-ethnic communities. These generally cover more recent times, but should be very useful for family historians of the future wanting to track down forebears who migrated to the country during the 20th century.

Meanwhile Northampton Museums and Art Gallery (**www.northamptonmuseums.com**) is working on an exploration of people, places, events and objects that have shaped the county. Funded by Arts Council England, the project will culminate in the major exhibition 'History of Northamptonshire in 100 Objects' in September 2025.

WATCH OUT!

The Soke of Peterborough has at times been part of both Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire. Parishes also fall between the Diocese of Peterborough and the Diocese of Ely.

LOCAL INDUSTRY

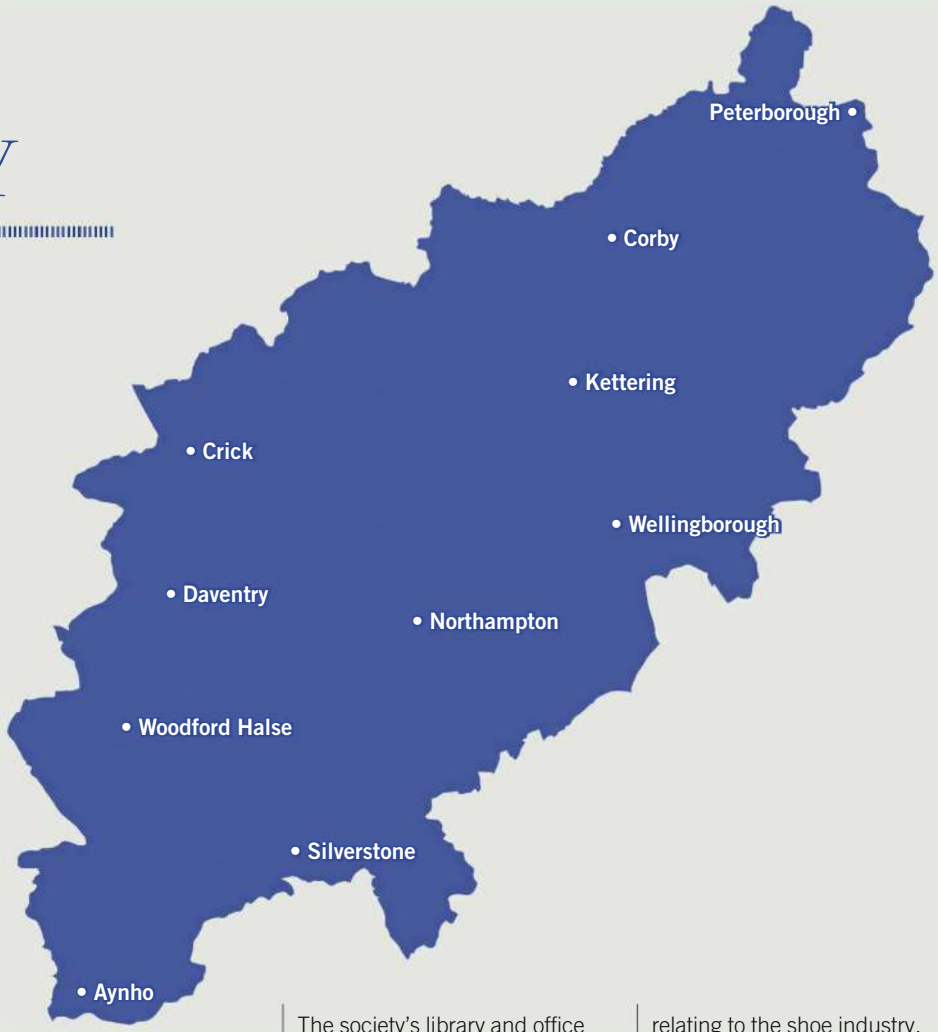
Footwear The county was a hotbed of boot and shoe manufacturing for over a century

The shoe trade became the dominant business in Northampton in the early 19th century, and over time this success was reflected in Kettering, Wellingborough and Rushden as well. The latter was home to John White Footwear which supplied more than eight million pairs of army boots during the Second World War, and after the war exported 400,000 pairs a year to the USA. The sites Rushden Research (**rushdenheartsandsoles.co.uk/shoetrade/johnwhite-intro.html**) and Northamptonshire Boot and Shoe (**northamptonshirebootandshoe.org.uk**) have more details.

This advert for John White Footwear dates from 1947

GETTY IMAGES / GRACES GUIDE

DIRECTORY



ARCHIVES & LIBRARIES

Northamptonshire Archives Service

a **Wootton Hall Park, Mereway, Northampton NN4 8BQ**
t 01604 362513
e *archivist@westnorthants.gov.uk*
w **westnorthants.gov.uk/northamptonshire-archives-service**

The county archive looks after parish material, electoral rolls, hospital, workhouse and asylum records, wills back to 1462, as well as the Northamptonshire Regiment and Northamptonshire Yeomanry collections. You'll also find First World War tribunals, searchable at Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**), plus personal letters and accounts, estate collections, school records, and material relating to the county's shoe and boot industry.

Northampton General Hospital Museum And Archive

a **Cliftonville, Northampton NN1 5BD**
t 01604 544868
e *ngh-tr.museumandarchive@nhs.net*
w **northamptongeneral.nhs.uk/About/OurHistory/Visiting-the-Archive.aspx**

The archive at Northampton General Hospital started life as a medical library at the first infirmary in George Row in 1790. It's run by volunteers and comprises books, documents, artwork and instruments.

Northamptonshire Central Library Discover Centre

a **Abington Street, Northampton NN1 2BA**
t 0300 126 7000
e *northampton.libraryplus@westnorthants.gov.uk*
w **westnorthants.gov.uk/visiting-library/local-and-family-history-libraries**

Local and family history resources are in the Discover Centre, which has different opening hours to the main library. Sources include census returns, electoral registers and poll books, parish registers on microfiche, and newspapers.

Peterborough Archives

a **Central Library, Broadway, Peterborough PE1 1RX**
t 01733 864160
e *archives.service@peterboroughlimited.co.uk*
w **peterboroughlibraries.org.uk/archives**

The website has details of microfilm collections, archival material and photos. Also Peterborough Cathedral Library (**peterborough-cathedral.org.uk/home/library-archives.aspx**) preserves early 19th-century local newspapers, plus cathedral and diocesan periodicals.

GROUPS & SOCIETIES

Northamptonshire Family History Society

w **northants-fhs.org**

The society runs one online and two branch meetings every month, and produces newsletters and a journal. The website details its transcription databases and look-up service. Much parish data and many memorial inscriptions are already available to search via Findmpast (**bit.ly/fmp-nants-fhs**).

Northamptonshire Record Society

w **northamptonshirerecordsociety.org.uk**

The society's library and office is in the same building as the county archive, at Wootton Hall Park. It has been publishing records relating to ancient Northamptonshire and the former Soke of Peterborough since 1920. You can view a list of free digitised publications via **northamptonshirerecordsociety.org.uk/free-download**.

Peterborough & District Family History Society

w **peterborofhs.org.uk**

You can download PDFs of a Name Index with more than 200,000 entries for individuals mentioned in the society's archives, then join the society to download the relevant record (annual membership costs £10).

MUSEUMS

Northampton Museums

w **www.northamptonmuseums.com/aboutus**

The museum service runs Abington Park Museum (Park Avenue South, Northampton NN1 5LW) and Northampton Museum and Art Gallery (5–6 Guildhall Road, Northampton NN1 1DP), plus events, projects, and temporary and permanent exhibitions. The service holds large collections relating to the shoe industry, and you can find out more via **www.northamptonmuseums.com/info/3/collections/130/collections-online**.

Northamptonshire Heritage Forum

w **northamptonshireheritageforum.co.uk**

The forum supports attractions including museums and historic houses across the county including Wellingborough Museum, which is housed in a former Victorian swimming pool and later shoe factory.

WEBSITES

Ancestry

w **ancestry.co.uk/search/categories/northamptonshire_parish/**

Ancestry's partnership with the county archive means that millions of Church of England baptisms, marriages and burials are available digitally.

Findmypast

w **bit.ly/fmp-northants-trib**

Highlights include First World War military tribunals and an index of wills proved by the Archdeaconry Court of Northampton and the Consistory Court of Peterborough, covering 1462–1857.

GETTY IMAGES

Estate map, 1833

Lara Kirkland from Essex Record Office tells us about a 19th-century farm map depicting hop grounds Interview By Rosemary Collins

Hop-harvesting is big business because the hop flower is crucial to the flavour of beer, and many of us have heard family stories of the hop-picking holidays when our urban relations travelled to spend their summers working on rural hop farms. These days, hops are primarily produced in the West Midlands as well as Kent, Suffolk, Surrey and Sussex. However, Essex in the east of England also has a forgotten history as a major hop producer in the 18th and 19th centuries. Here Lara Kirkland, archivist at Essex Record Office (ERO), shares a map that reveals one of the county's hop farms.

Essex produced almost a quarter of the national yield of hops by 1710

Can You Describe The Estate Map?

The estate map shows Brook Farm in the village of Sible Hedingham in the Colne Valley, surveyed by T Savill in 1833 when the property belonged to a Mr Edmund Bunn. Estate maps were commissioned by landowners between the 16th and the 19th centuries. Like this one, they may have a reference table of fields, names and acreages. One of my favourite field names on this map is Tortoise Field. I cannot help but wonder why it was called this.

Why Did You Choose It?

Maps are something everyone can enjoy; they are universal because they do not require you to read Latin or Old English to appreciate them. This map is quite artistic for the time, using ink and watercolour to create a detailed picture of the farm. I find it remarkable how well the colours have lasted even after 191 years.

While cataloguing and researching the map, I found that this was not the only record we hold relating to Brook Farm or the Bunn family. My research led me to a catalogue of growing crops from 1866, sale particulars from 1902, and the will that bequeathed the property to Edmund, left by his uncle who was named Edmund Bunn as well. I also consulted the 1840 tithe map of Sible Hedingham to locate the farm, and discovered it was situated in the north-east section of the parish.

What Does The Map Tell Us About The County?

The map is a great illustration of hop lands in Essex, and how significant they were. We are still unsure why hop lands were so abundant in parishes like Sible and Castle Hedingham, but it may be down to a combination of the soil, climate and local expertise in cultivating the crop. As you can see, hop grounds are depicted quite distinctively, with the black vertical lines of the poles supporting the fluffy green hop vines that are drawn around them.

Hops are widely accepted to have been brought over from Flanders in Belgium in the 1520s, because hopped ale – ie beer – was growing in popularity as people moved away from the traditional English malted ale. Hop-growing was concentrated in the south of England with large acreages appearing in Kent, Surrey, Hampshire and Sussex, but Essex had also become a major grower, producing almost a quarter of the national yield by 1710.

Sadly, it was not to last. A combination of significant changes in demand, the introduction of centralised brewing, and the wider availability of hops in Kent led to a major decline of the hop grounds in Essex. By 1866 Essex was only growing 137 acres (compared with 890 in 1724), and 20 years later hop-growing had virtually ceased here.

So how does Brook Farm fit into this? The catalogue of crops that I mentioned earlier lists the likes of wheat, barley and oats, but interestingly also tells us that much of the land in the hop grounds was being used to grow potatoes, which may mean that at the time the catalogue was produced hop-growing was in decline.

Despite this, the people of Essex were still involved in the industry, with it referenced in sources such as 19th-century school logbooks where pupils are recorded as absent from class due to hop-picking. Large numbers of temporary workers were recruited for the harvest in early September. In Kent and East Sussex workers often came from London, while in Essex recruitment was more localised and early records of payments reveal that these workers were often women and children paid a daily rate. This tradition of hop-

Visit Us

Essex Record Office
a Wharf Road, Chelmsford CM2 6YT
t 03330 132122
e *ero.enquiry@essex.gov.uk*
w **essexrecordoffice.co.uk**

ERO holds collections that together tell the story of nearly 1,000 years of the county's past. The office is open Tuesday to Thursday, plus some Fridays and Saturdays. For full details, see **essexrecordoffice.co.uk/visit-us/opening-hours**.

picking continued until the introduction of hop-picking machines in the 1960s; at ERO we hold several oral history interviews that recall hop-picking in the countryside, including one with Maureen Chalk (born 1935) available through our catalogue Essex Archives Online (**essexarchivesonline.co.uk**) at **tinyurl.com/eao-pick** (free registration required).

Today Brook Farm has been built over, and only the farmhouse remains. I wonder how much residents of Sible Hedingham know about the history of hop-growing in the area, or their predecessors' crucial role?

What Other Documents Do You Have?

ERO is one of the oldest and largest county record offices in England. Established in 1938, we care for written archives, pictorial material, and recorded sound and video that together take up over eight miles of shelving.

In particular, I would like to highlight the other historical maps we hold – an extensive collection including smaller hand-drawn maps of farms, estates and villages, as well as larger printed maps such as tithe maps, enclosure maps and Ordnance Surveys. Our favourites include the Chapman and Andre county map from 1777 and the Walker map of Chelmsford dating from 1591.

To find out more, I recommend *Printed Maps of Essex from 1576* by a long-time friend of ERO Peter Walker, which has been published by the Friends of Historic Essex – a charity that has supported us since 1954 (**friendsofhistoricessex.org/publications**).

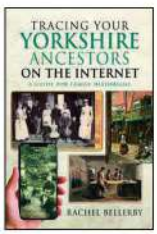
Tracing Your Yorkshire Ancestors On The Internet

A Guide For Family Historians

YORKSHIRE RESEARCH

Rachel Bellerby
Pen & Sword, 224 pages, £14.99

A Royal Army Service Corps instructor with Auxiliary Territorial Service trainee motorcycle dispatch riders in York, 23 May 1941



Rachel Bellerby has put together an extremely useful guide to internet resources for family history research in all four modern ceremonial counties of Yorkshire.

She introduces the different parts of the region and gives details of each local archive, where to find it and what it holds, as well as how to search the online catalogue for your ancestors and the wider catalogue on The National Archives' website (**discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk**).

The book is broken into sections dealing with different subjects, such as birth, marriage and death records, the census, education, occupations, emigration and immigration. Bellerby also reminds us that although all of the websites were operating at the time of writing this can change, and suggests checking the Wayback Machine on the Internet Archive (**archive.org**) or searching for the dataset on Google if any links don't work.

The book showcases Yorkshire collections on country-wide websites such as Ancestry (**ancestry.co.uk**), which is particularly good for West Yorkshire, and Findmypast (**findmypast.co.uk**), for the rest of Yorkshire, as well as free sites including GENUKI (**genuki.org.uk**).

Bellerby also discusses the Yorkshire BMD site (**yorkshirebmd.org.uk**), which has birth, marriage and death records from local register offices throughout the region, and is a useful alternative to the General Register Office (**www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content**).

The book includes websites from university special collections, museums, film archives and local history societies, while family history societies are well represented too.

Tracing Your Yorkshire Ancestors on the Internet has a handy index at the back to the various subjects and depositories, and I would highly recommend it to anyone who has an interest in Yorkshire genealogy. There are many websites here to get even experienced Yorkshire researchers on their computer.

Carol Ann Kerry-Green is a genealogist who lives in Hull

PUBLIC DOMAIN

DIGITAL PICKS

Rosemary Collins highlights three digital resources that caught our eye this month

PODCAST

Come By Chance

cbc.ca/listen/cbc-podcasts/1430-come-by-chance

In this podcast from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Newfoundland writer Luke Quinton tells the story of one of the island's most extraordinary secrets – multiple people born in a hospital in the town of Come By Chance discovered decades later that they'd been switched at birth with other babies and raised in the wrong family. Free.

LISTEN

Time Travels

tinyurl.com/bbc-scotland-time-travels

In this series from BBC Radio Scotland, Susan Morrison and experts discuss a variety of topics from Scottish history. Recent episodes include the bloody struggles for the throne in medieval Scotland, the rehabilitation of injured soldiers after the First World War, and how Scots took their holidays during the Second World War. Free.

WEBSITE

Transatlantic Slave Trade Connections To Peel

tinyurl.com/google-arts-culture-peel

Despite its small size, the Isle of Man played a surprisingly large role in the transatlantic slave trade. Created by Manx National Heritage and hosted on Google Arts & Culture, this online exhibition uses photography, audio and archival records to reveal the connections to slavery in the town of Peel today.

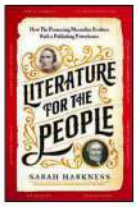
DIGITAL COLLECTION, THE NATIONAL MUSEUM IN KRAKÓW

Literature For The People

How The Pioneering Macmillan Brothers Built A Publishing Powerhouse

SOCIAL HISTORY

Sarah Harkness
Macmillan, 496 pages, £25



The Macmillan family's rise in three generations from a croft on the Isle of Arran, to starting a successful publishing company, to the peerage has long been a legend of social mobility. Here Sarah Harkness tells the story of brothers Daniel and Alexander Macmillan, and shows how a little-known publisher of religious material became an international powerhouse with the promotion to a newly literate public of entertaining but morally uplifting books, such as *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857) and *Westward Ho!* (1855). There are family details, but the focus here is on what the Macmillans published and how they made it accessible to the public.

Alexander *(left)* and Daniel Macmillan, the brothers who founded a publishing empire

There are fascinating asides on such matters as lodgings, loans and general living conditions in the 1830s, giving a rounded picture of the Victorian age. Harkness explains not only what our forebears did but how they thought as well, which is an extremely valuable addition to family history.

This book is a testament to the dynamism of the Victorian period and a demonstration of how family history can be told via the story of a business.

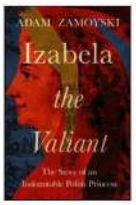
Jad Adams is a historian and author. His books include *Decadent Women* (Reaktion, 2023)

Reader Review Your chance to assess the latest books

Izabela The Valiant The Story Of An Indomitable Polish Princess

FAMILY BIOGRAPHY

Adam Zamoyski
HarperCollins, 208 pages, £25



The author's 3x great grandmother, born in 1745, married into the powerful and political Czartoryski family. Information is collated from family documents and Izabela's detailed notebooks, held in the Czartoryski Museum in Kraków.

Izabela the Valiant is also a history of Poland with references to fighting, invasions, destruction of the family estates and their involvement in negotiations between European rulers.

Izabela's life is a fascinating read. Until her death in 1835, she educated herself and used her foreign travels to expand her knowledge and improve the lives of Polish people. This included a tour of iron factories in Birmingham, cotton mills in Manchester and steelworks in Sheffield to take back ideas for Polish manufacturing.

Useful family trees and maps of the partition of the country are included, but the book lacks a brief glossary of some of the political terms.

Izabela Czartoryska, a key figure in Polish history

All in all, it's an interesting insight into one family's personal and political life in a country whose history is not so well known.

Marjorie Hardey, Sheffield
Marjorie has been researching her family history for 16 years and enjoys visiting various archives

Join Us... Send us an email if you'd like to join our reviewing panel e *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

TV & RADIO

Jonathan Wright previews upcoming programmes on history and family history

Blitz

Apple TV+
Friday 22 November

The cast of *Blitz* includes Saoirse Ronan as Rita, Elliott Heffernan as George and Paul Weller as Gerald

The evacuation of children from Britain's cities during the Second World War was traumatic for many youngsters. Leaving aside stories of abuse, many suffered from a huge sense of culture shock and, despite the dangers from bombs dropped by the Luftwaffe, pined for the familiarity and bustle of urban life.

This idea of a longing for home lies at the centre of Sir Steve McQueen's latest feature, which follows the odyssey of nine-year-old George (newcomer Elliott Heffernan), who wants to return to the East End. Put on a train by his mother Rita, George doesn't get any further than an hour outside London before he takes the opportunity to hop off and turn around for the city.

But his journey back to Rita (Saoirse Ronan) and his grandfather Gerald (Paul Weller) proves to be perilous, and she has to go in search of her son.

Perhaps surprisingly considering McQueen's track record as a radical filmmaker, the man who made *12 Years a Slave* (2013) and the anthology series *Small Axe* (2020), *Blitz* is in many respects a wartime film that sits in a grand tradition of British movies – notably in the way it salutes the working-class communities who so often bore the brunt of the Germans' bombing, and did so much to ensure that the capital continued to function.

But *Blitz* isn't in thrall to this cinematic history. George's father is Grenadian, and the boy's heritage means that the film also functions as a study of attitudes towards race in the mid-20th century.

It's also a film that takes delight, if that's the right word, in London's more unsavoury characters, and in particular the way certain ne'er-do-wells saw the blackout as an opportunity for looting and even stealing from corpses. Enter Stephen Graham and Kathy Burke, who play their roles with such relish that they could almost have stepped from the pages of a Charles Dickens novel.

Blitz was released in cinemas on Friday 1 November, and its sweep and ambition mean that it's definitely worth catching on the big screen if you get the chance, instead of waiting for it to arrive on Apple TV+.

Archive On 4: Up In Smoke

BBC Sounds
Available now

Why did we put up for so many years with pubs, clubs and restaurants filled with choking and carcinogenic smoke? It's a question pondered by Alan Hall in a documentary aired on BBC Radio 4 on Saturday 2 November that traces the social history of lighting up a ciggy – and the moments that led to the habit being increasingly frowned upon, such as the catastrophic fire at King's Cross London Underground station in 1987, which was likely caused by a smoker's dropped match.

DNA Journey With Ancestry

ITVX
Available now

As we noted last issue, there seemed a good chance that *DNA Journey* would drop in the autumn schedules, and so it proved. The first three episodes of the new series have aired since our last issue went on sale, and are now available to stream.

Sue Johnston and Ricky Tomlinson explore their roots in *DNA Journey*

The first episode featured *Life on Mars* stars John Simm and Philip Glenister, and included a huge revelation: Simm's discovery that the man he called "Dad" was not his biological father. Simm considered dropping out of the show, but decided to continue participating because he thought it would be a chance to learn more about his biological father.

The second show in the series reunited *Royle Family* and *Brookside* actors Ricky Tomlinson and Sue Johnston, who have been friends for 40 years and share both a love of Liverpool and a passion for social justice.

The third episode starred James Nesbitt and Sarah Parish. Also actors, the friends starred in the Netflix miniseries *Stay Close* (2021), and are united in having recently lost parents.

The remaining three episodes in the series are scheduled to be broadcast in 2025.

Wolf Hall: The Mirror And The Light

BBC One and BBC iPlayer
November

In 1536, following the execution of Anne Boleyn, Thomas Cromwell was one of the most powerful men in England. Despite his modest birth, he had risen to become Henry VIII's chief minister, although "chief fixer" might be a better description. And yet within four years, his enemies first circling and then striking, Cromwell was beheaded on the orders of the king.

It's a fall that the late novelist Hilary Mantel depicted in the third volume of her hugely acclaimed *Wolf Hall* trilogy (2009–2020). The two previous books were made into a single TV series in 2015 (still available on BBC iPlayer), and now the final novel has been adapted as well.

Mark Rylance, who starred in the critically acclaimed first series, returns as Cromwell while Damian Lewis and Kate Phillips also reprise their roles as Henry and his third wife Jane Seymour.

PARISA TAGHIZADEH/APPLE TV+/ ITV/VOLTAGE TV

Strathclyde Institute for Genealogical Studies

University of Strathclyde Glasgow

World leading courses in Genealogical Studies

Our programme covers sources from across the world with an emphasis on research within the British Isles.

- Gain a postgraduate Certificate, Diploma or MSc in Genealogical, Palaeographic and Heraldic Studies.
- Flexible online format; study from anywhere at anytime.
- A previous degree may not be required for entry.
- Developed by professional genealogists with constructive feedback provided by assigned tutors at all levels.
- Join our modular postgraduate Certificate or take an 8 week beginner to intermediate class starting in January 2025.
- Register now to join our free online MOOC 'Genetic Genealogy: Researching Your Family Tree using DNA'.

We will be at RootsTech 2025!

www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/centreforlifelonglearning
Email: cll-sigs@strath.ac.uk

The University of Strathclyde is a charitable body, registered in Scotland, number SC015263

Pharos Tutors

Guiding the route to your ancestors

Short topic-based **online courses** and **certificate programmes** in family history, local history and related topics.

Flexible options to fit around your learning needs.

Learn from the experts

START YOUR JOURNEY TODAY

www.pharostutors.com

coram better chances for children since 1739

Is your ancestor in the Foundling Hospital Archive?

Find out for free at archives.coram.org.uk

The children's charity Coram has digitised and transcribed 100,000 pages from its Foundling Hospital Archive. These unique records, spanning 1739 to 1899, are now free to access online.

The Foundling Hospital in London was a residential home for children whose parents were unable to care for them. It admitted children born in Britain and had networks of wet nurses and apprentice masters across England. The digital archive contains:

- **22,031** children and their parents
- Governors and staff of the Foundling Hospital
- County nurses and nursing inspectors
- Apprentice masters and mistresses

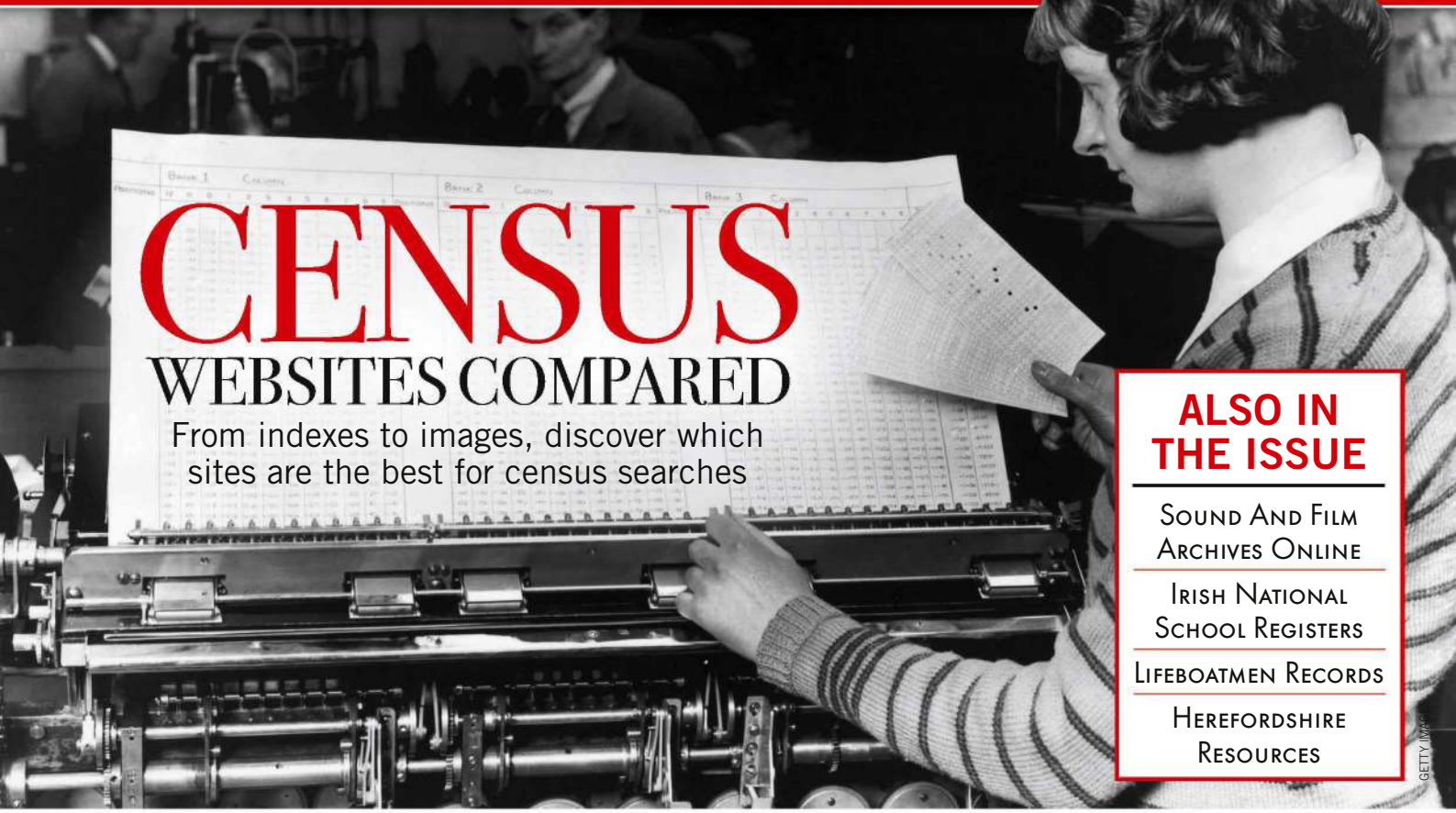
Discover your Foundling Hospital connection today!

Made possible with Heritage Fund

Photo: John Feltham (No. 21151) with his mother Emma Bennett before his admission in 1866. In 1881, he was apprenticed to a London printer/journalist. From Petitions Admitted bundle 75, case 39.

NEXT MONTH

Our Christmas issue goes on sale on **3 December**



CENSUS WEBSITES COMPARED

From indexes to images, discover which sites are the best for census searches

GETTY IMAGES

ALSO IN THE ISSUE

- Sound And Film Archives Online
- Irish National School Registers
- Lifeboatmen Records
- Herefordshire Resources

AGRA
ASSOCIATION OF GENEALOGISTS AND RESEARCHERS IN ARCHIVES

WHY HIRE AN AGRA GENEALOGIST?

- We represent the best professionals in England and Wales
- Accredited independent genealogists
- Wide-ranging skills to solve challenging problems
- Experienced and regular archive researchers
- Backed by a Code of Practice to offer peace of mind

Visit **www.agra.org.uk/memberbrowse** to find the right genealogist for your research.
AGRA - Genealogical Excellence

DON'T JUST READ *BBC COUNTRYFILE MAGAZINE*... LISTEN TO IT, TOO

Your chance for a weekly adventure in nature and the countryside with the *BBC Countryfile Magazine* team

You can find the Plodcast on all good podcast platforms

KERRYWOOD RESEARCH

Family History in London

Professional – Qualified – Experienced

- Research at all London Archives
- Workhouse/Poor Law Records
- Transcribing English & Latin Documents

AGRA MEMBER

Contact for Free Assessment/Estimate

JUDY LESTER, MA (Cantab.), PG Certificate

www.kerrywood.co.uk | +44 (0)7940 409920 | kerrywood55@gmail.com

TRENCHARD PARTNERSHIP

AGRA MEMBER

Professional Family History Research undertaken in London and Home Counties archives. All types of UK research considered.

Experienced researchers Mike Trenchard [AGRA Fellow] & Sue Trenchard [AGRA Member] will help you piece your past together and break down your brick walls.

CONTACT US FOR A FREE ASSESSMENT/ESTIMATE

mike@trenchardpartnership.co.uk | sue@familyhistoryresearch-uk.com

07735 988717 | www.trenchardpartnership.co.uk

gathered.

Discover your next craft project

Discover the website packed with crochet, knitting, sewing, papercraft and stitching projects

www.gathered.how

AGRA MEMBER *Past Discoveries* apg member

UK Wide Family and House History Research

By a Qualified Professional Genealogist - Lisa Dunbar Dip. Gen. QG.

All enquiries are welcome. All types of genealogical research undertaken – including brief look-ups to full family histories, brick-walls in your research, house history research and bespoke bound family history books which are ideal as Birthday or Christmas presents. We also offer various family history packages.

Tel: +44 (0) 1279 651754 **www.pastdiscoveries.co.uk**
Mob: +44 (0) 7966 501874 **enquiries@pastdiscoveries.co.uk**

"IT'S THE BEST COURSE OUT THERE."

"IT EXCEEDED ALL MY EXPECTATIONS."

IHGS THE SCHOOL OF FAMILY HISTORY

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE IN GENEALOGY

WWW.IHGS.AC.UK

+44 (0) 1227 768664

ENQUIRIES@IHGS.AC.UK

"THIS COURSE IS A MUST."

"JUST BRILLIANT."

"THE KNOWLEDGE I HAVE GAINED FROM IT IS ALMOST IMMEASURABLE."

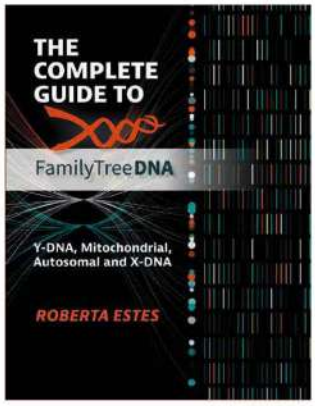
THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO FamilyTree**DNA**:

Y-DNA, Mitochondrial, Autosomal and X-DNA

By Roberta Estes

Just some of what's covered:

- **The science behind DNA tests – written for everyday people**
- **Y-DNA – Your Father's Story – types of markers and how to use your results**
- **Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) – Your Mother's Story – matches and what they mean**
- **Autosomal Family Finder Tests – Matches to all your family lines**
- **X-DNA – Your secret tool that's included with Family Finder**
- **An extensive glossary explaining the vocabulary associated with DNA testing.**



xv, 247 pp., profusely illus., paper. 2024. ISBN 978-0806321288.

Black and White print edition: 31.93 GBP
Color print edition: 47.36 GBP

ORDER from **www.amazon.co.uk** or **www.amazon.eu**

www.genealogical.com

'Walter Was A Child Hero'

CELEBRATING YOUR DISCOVERIES

Karen Meager was astonished to uncover a relative who often saved other children from drowning. By **Gail Dixon**

This illustration depicting Walter Myatt was published in a newspaper in June 1897

Two young girls were playing by the deep, still waters of the Grand Surrey Canal in Camberwell, South London, in 1895. One of them fell into the canal and her friend, who went to her aid, also fell in. Neither of the girls could swim, and both faced great peril.

It was at this point that 10-year-old Walter Albert Myatt courageously leapt in and, despite not being able to swim either, rescued both girls. "Walter is my great uncle," explains Karen Meager, "although I didn't know of his existence until I began researching our family tree."

KAREN MEAGER
is a retired administrator who lives in Kent

If I could say anything to Walter it would be that I'm so proud I found you

Walter was born on 6 April 1885 in Camberwell, to John and Florence Myatt. The family lived close to the canal, where many children played. A number of them had drowned in the canal since its opening in 1807.

"After his daring rescue of the two girls, Walter's bravery was fêted in the newspapers and that was how I discovered his many courageous acts.

"The articles explained that much fuss was made of his bravery, but apparently Walter just shrugged it off.

"He learnt to swim after the rescue, and saved another child's life six months later."

Walter's valour was lauded by the Royal Humane Society (**https://royalhumanesociety.org.uk**), which was founded in 1774 by doctors who were keen to investigate methods of resuscitation.

"He was awarded testimonials on vellum and parchment, which are bestowed by the society when a person puts themselves in considerable danger to save or attempt to save someone. By the time Walter was 19 he had rescued 18 people."

The society's records are stored at The London Archives (**thelondonarchives.org**).

"I visited in 2012 and was so pleased to see the ledgers detailing his numerous rescues. I ordered a replica of one of his certificates, and it's now framed and hanging proudly in my study."

After Walter's initial saves people would "send for Myatt" if someone had got into difficulty in the canal. They were usually young children. In 1898, the *Hampshire Telegraph* wrote an article about Walter with the headline "England's Child Heroes – The Boy Who Tops the List". The text described one particularly daring rescue.

After saving a boy who had fallen into the canal, Walter "showed that he possessed invention as well as bravery. The art of resuscitation was an unknown one to him but there lay the boy unconscious and something had to be done. Myatt did it by pouring a generous quantity of canal water down his throat in the belief that it would make him sick. It did, so sick that he came to."

Karen continues, "After Walter left school he worked as an office lad and labourer before enlisting in the Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) for three years. He later worked as a printer on Fleet Street for the *Daily Telegraph*."

In 1915, Walter joined the 12th Battalion of the Rifle Brigade and was posted to the Western Front. "He spent two years suffering the horrors of the trenches, sometimes waist-high in mud and water, with the constant threat of disease and death. Tragically, he was killed in action during the Battle of Cambrai on 30 November 1917.

"Walter is buried at Fins New British Cemetery, Sorel-Le-Grand, in the Somme. I visited for the first time in October 2006 and again later to pay my respects. The cemetery is in such a peaceful part of the countryside it's hard to imagine the horrors that my great uncle saw there.

"If I could say anything to Walter it would be that I'm so proud I found you and can tell people of your incredible bravery. I will not let you be forgotten."

WHO'S YOUR HERO?

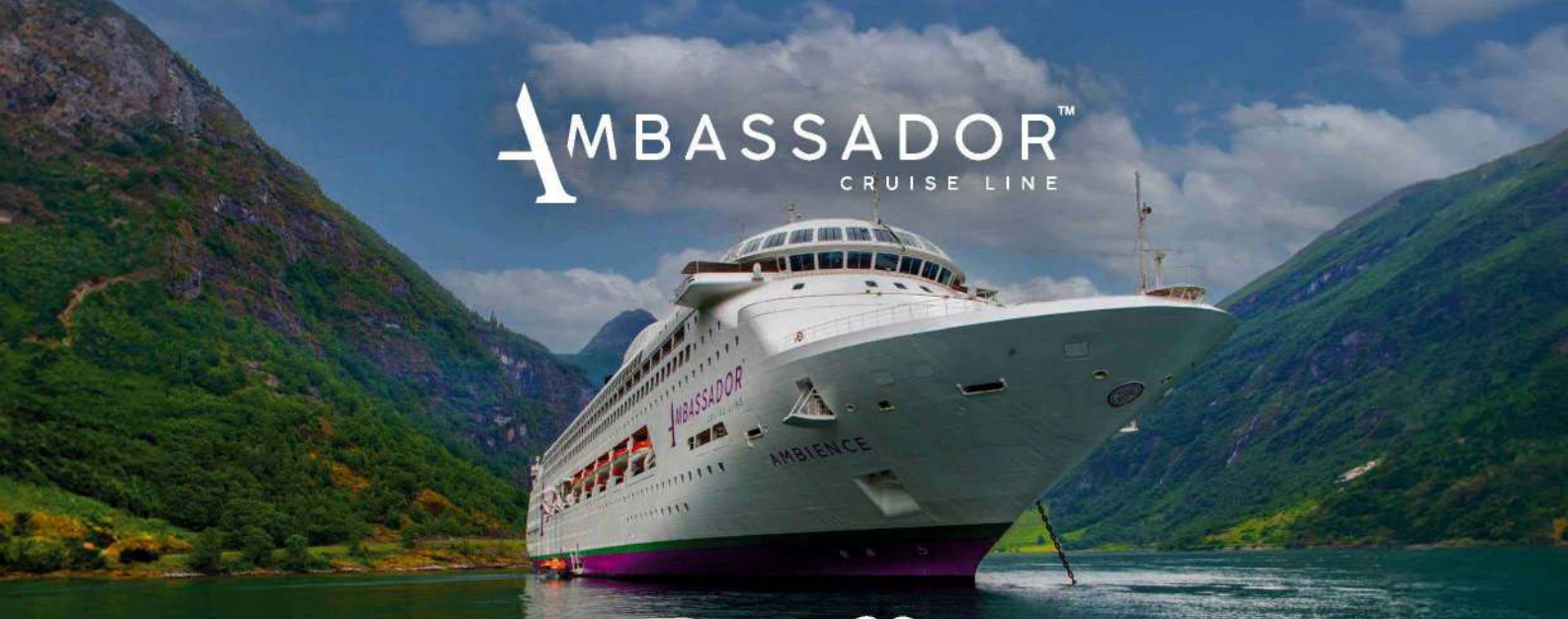
Share your family hero with us and they could appear in the magazine!

Each month we'll award our favourite a year's Pro subscription to **findmypast.co.uk** worth £184.99.

Find my past

Please write to us at the address on page 6 or email *wdytyaeditorial@ourmedia.co.uk*

AMBASSADOR™
CRUISE LINE



Smaller Ships

BIGGER SEASON

2026-27 SEASON NOW ON SALE

Discover our outstanding new season with 83 sailings, 140,000 nautical miles, 146 ports of call, in 48 countries. We are an authentic, affordable quality, no-fly cruise line, where our onboard service is of the highest standard and quality. Plus, with our onboard currency in GBP£, avoid exchange rates and wasted money. Join us and enjoy the warmest welcome at sea.

- 7 REGIONAL PORTS
- NO FLY CRUISES
- ADULTS ONLY
- AFFORDABLE QUALITY
- FRIENDLIEST WELCOME
- AMAZING ENTERTAINMENT
- EXCEPTIONAL CUISINE
- SMALL – MID SIZED SHIPS
- 94% OF GUESTS WOULD RECOMMEND US

Discover our flagship, Ambience

SILVER BRITISH TRAVEL AWARDS 2023
BEST CRUISE LINE FOR NO-FLY CRUISE HOLIDAYS

feefo 4.7/5 Service Rating 1,846 Reviews

THE BEST VALUE AT SEA

SAY HELLO AT

ambassadorcruiseline.com

Call **0808 296 1911**

USE CODE WHO5 FOR AN ADDITIONAL 5% BONUS DISCOUNT

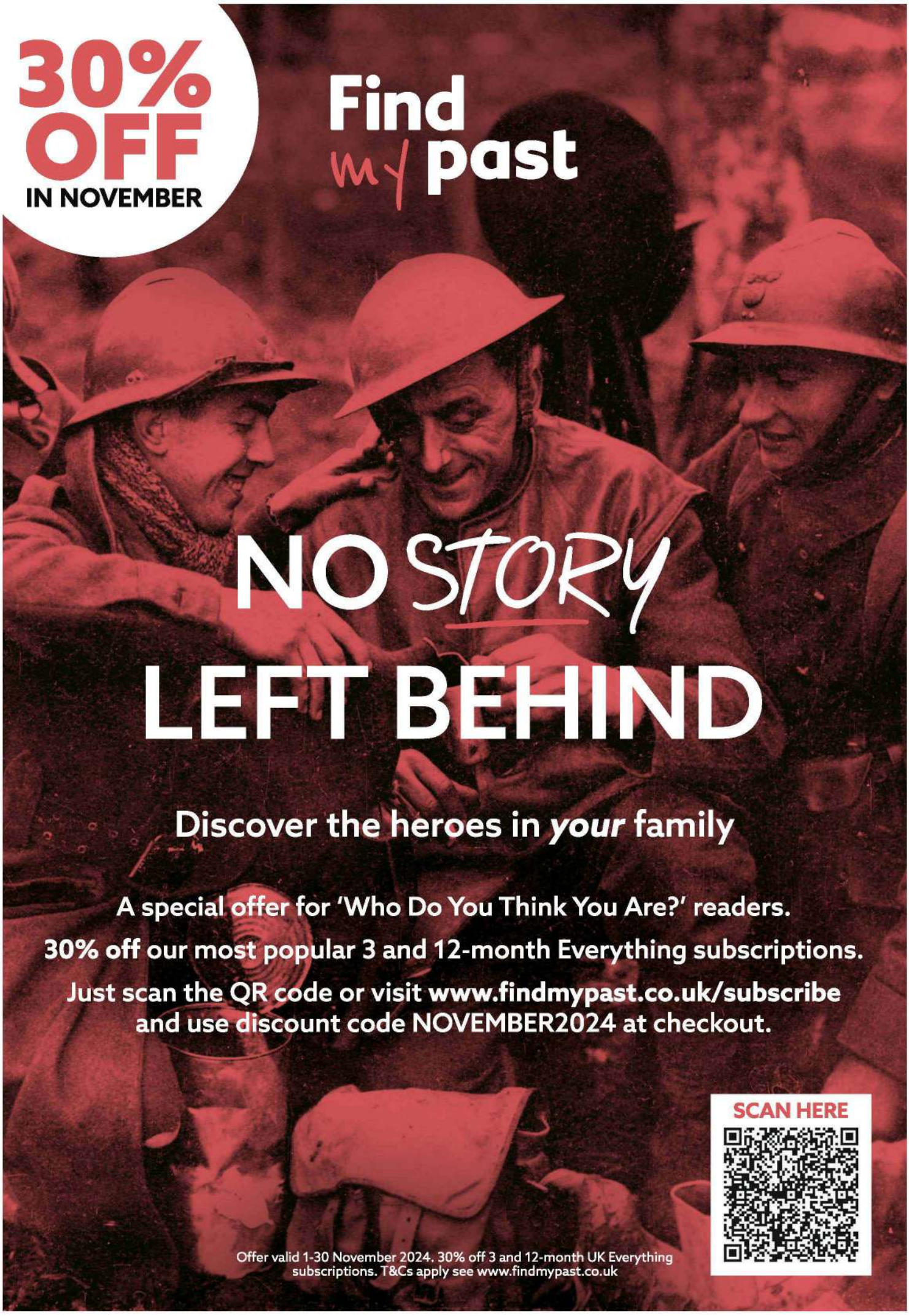
EDITORS' PICKS cruisecritic 2023 Best Value for Money (Ocean)

CRUISERS' CHOICE cruisecritic 2023 Best UK Mid-Size Cruises Overall

ABTA ABTA No. Y6765

SILVER TRAVEL AWARDS 2023 WINNER

Fares subject to availability, capacity controlled and may be withdrawn or changed without notice. Buy One Get One Free offer is available on new bookings made from 08:00 9th October 2024 until 23:59, 4th December 2024 inclusive, on any Ambition sailing departing between 22/03/2026 - 24/03/2027, and any Ambience sailing departing between 10/04/2026 - 29/03/2027 applicable on all twin grades. Solo travellers will get 50% off the applicable full single fare over the same period. Promotion is structured as first guest paying full Saver Fare and second guest, sharing the same cabin, is free. 20% off the drinks package applies to our top Expedition drinks package when the Ambassador Fare is purchased at time of booking. It is only available on those sailings included in the promotion. Please note this promotion is not applicable to any festive/in port events or any booking made outside of the above sailing dates. All 2026/2027 season sailings are not eligible or included in any Black Friday Promotion. It is only applicable to the lead booked guest and secondary guest in each cabin over the age of 18 and is not applicable to any 3rd/4th berth guest or any child under 18 travelling. Full T&C's available on our website ambassadorcruiseline.com. The promotional code above cannot be combined with other charity/member/association/media or affiliate promotion codes or onboard future cruise offers. The promotional code is not valid on Ambassador's Festive Events, selected charters and cannot be used over Ambassador's Black Friday promotional period. The promotional code WHO5 cannot be combined with other charity/member/association/media or affiliate promotion codes or onboard future cruise offers. It may only be combined with an Ambassador Campaign Promotional code advertised on the Ambassador website. The promotional code is not valid on Ambassador's Festive Events, selected charters and cannot be used over Ambassador's Black Friday promotional period. The promotional code can only be used for new bookings only made directly on Ambassador's website or through our call centre, it cannot be used for bookings made through travel agents or other third parties. Promotional code is valid on all new bookings from 24 July 2024 to 31 March 2025, closing at 23.59 for all 2024/2025/2026 sailings. The promotional code may be discontinued at any time at Ambassador's discretion. Fares subject to availability and may be withdrawn or changed without notice. For full terms and conditions of booking visit www.ambassadorcruiseline.com. Extras not included: Travel insurance, travel costs to/ from the port of embarkation, port parking, onboard gratuities and service charges where a package has not been purchased (automatically billed to the onboard account), optional shore excursions, discretionary expenditure of a personal nature including hot and cold alcoholic & non-alcoholic drinks, gifts, shopping, laundry, Wi-Fi and communication, and any visa & health certificate charges that may apply. Ambassador Cruise Line reserves the right to cancel, change or amend any theme cruise activities/speakers/acts at short notice. In the event of your cruise being cancelled, you will be guaranteed a full refund. Cruise holidays booked with Ambassador Cruise Holidays Limited, trading as Ambassador Cruise Line, are financially protected in accordance with the Package Travel and Linked Arrangements Regulations 2018. Copyright 2024. Ambassador Cruise Holidays Limited is a company registered in England and Wales. Registered number: 13299365.


30% OFF
IN NOVEMBER
Find my past
NO STORY
LEFT BEHIND
Discover the heroes in your family
A special offer for 'Who Do You Think You Are?' readers.
30% off our most popular 3 and 12-month Everything subscriptions.
Just scan the QR code or visit www.findmypast.co.uk/subscribe
and use discount code NOVEMBER2024 at checkout.
SCAN HERE
Offer valid 1-30 November 2024. 30% off 3 and 12-month UK Everything subscriptions. T&Cs apply see www.findmypast.co.uk